

# **FOREST-WIDE COLLABORATIVE TRAILS ASSESSMENT**

**CHATTAHOOCHEE-OCONEE  
NATIONAL FOREST**

**BLUE RIDGE RANGER DISTRICT**

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY RESULTS

# BLUE RIDGE RANGER DISTRICT

In the Blue Ridge Ranger District, 15 individual trails and just over 66 miles were assessed. This represents 29% of the total non-motorized trail in the District (229 miles). Specifically, trails assessed as part of this project include:

## Blue Ridge Ranger District- Trails Assessed

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL NUMBER	TRAIL MILEAGE	MILEAGE ASSESSED	DESIGNED USE	TRAIL CLASS
Arkaquah	25	5.3	1.5	Pedestrian	3
Cooper Creek	196	1.6	1.6	Pedestrian	3
Cooper Cr. Connector	87	0.67	0.67	Pedestrian	3
Coosa Backcountry	111	11.3	6	Pedestrian	3
Desoto Falls	18	1.0	1.0	Pedestrian	4
Duncan Ridge	4	30	30	Pedestrian	3
Lake Blue Ridge	105	0.6	0.6	Pedestrian	4
Len Foote Hike Inn	174	5.5	5.5	Pedestrian	3
Lower/Upper Green Mountain	165D & C	4.6	4.6	Bicycle	3
Mill Shoals	89	2.5	1.5	Pedestrian	3
Rocky Mountain	114	1.8	1.8	Pedestrian	3
Shope Gap	193	0.6	0.6	Pedestrian	3
Stanley Gap	165	4.8	4.8	Bicycle	3
Yellow Mountain	86	3.2	1.0	Pedestrian	3

# Public Education/Outreach Activities

In addition to the inventory and assessment work conducted on the district, the following contract activities took place on the Blue Ridge Ranger District:

## **Aska trails Public Inventory & Assessment Workshop**

Scott Linnenburger and Jeremy Wimpey hosted a public workshop on Upper Green Mountain and Lower Green Mountain trails. Approximately 35 attendees, including Forest Supervisor's Office staff, met at the Deep Gap Trailhead that provides access to the heavily used Aska trail system (bike, hike), near Blue Ridge, GA.

This workshop introduced the assessment team and their inventory and assessment procedures to the CoTrails and USFS attendees. Attendees hiked the trails in groups and discussed several features and problems located along Upper Green Mountain and Lower Green Mountain trails. Topics covered included visitor and water management, USFS trail classes, and related design parameters. Trail conditions illustrated topics of importance related to the physical, social and managerial setting of the trails. Discussion with USFS and CoTrails attendees covered topics related to improving visitor experience and protecting natural resources with trail alignment and maintenance improvements.

Workshop focused on topics related to sustainable layout and management of shared use trails to minimize impacts to natural resources and other users experience. Upper Green Mountain trail illustrated several points related to poor design leading to erosion and potential user conflict on steep fall aligned sections of trail. Lower Green Mountain trail highlighted problems and poor visitor experience related to trails located on old road/extraction route corridors.

Lower Green Mountain trail was chosen as the location for a field demonstration to exhibit trail maintenance activities that are recommended as a result of our assessment. The site was selected based on the needs of the trail, the educational opportunities present and the ability of the site to support a road to trail conversion workshop.





## Physical Setting/Sustainability

Many of the trails included in this assessment are located completely or in part on existing forest management routes, including trails in backcountry settings. While locating trails on forest management routes is expedient from a design and construction standpoint, these types of routes (i.e. old haul roads, railroad beds, fire breaks, etc.) are rarely created with long-term physical sustainability as a priority. Many of these routes are insloped (negative cross slope) or were not developed with effective water-shedding structures. Most are very linear on both horizontal and vertical axes and do not have a rolling contour. Effective water management is difficult to attain without substantial material movement and ongoing maintenance. As a result, the unnecessarily wide trail tread (typically a 6-10' corridor) is often degraded from water-related erosion. Future maintenance activities will require water management over this entire width, resulting in a trail corridor that has resource impacts and maintenance needs more closely associated with System Roads.

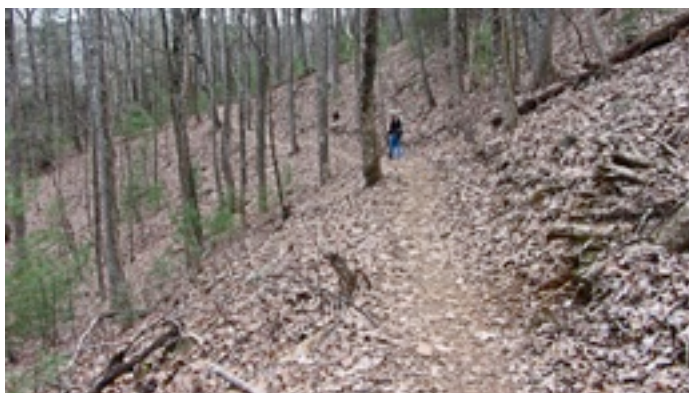
Corridor management, including the clearing of downed trees, the removal of hazard trees, and the removal of encroaching vegetation appear sporadically implemented, often not attaining the annual treatment levels dictated by Forest Service Trail Handbook Operations and Maintenance Considerations for Class 3 and 4 trails. Water management structures are more often log or rock water bars, whose drains are sediment-filled and not functioning, rather than rolling grade dips, which are more durable and less maintenance-intensive. Many trails have multiple bridges crossing small streams and wet areas. Yet many continue to have multiple unmanaged wet area crossings, minimizing the overall effectiveness of sedimentation control.

Where trail sections have been specifically routed or constructed for recreation, grades are often overly steep or excessively flat. This perpetuates the water management problems associated with the adopted, wide historic routes. Trail grades often exceed the prescribed trail design parameter for the designed uses, subsequently soil erosion is evident where these steep grades exist. On the other hand, extremely flat trail grades especially those situated at the bottom of drainages, contribute sediment to intermittent or perennial waters, at minimum following storm events.

Notable trail sections that model sustainability include Duncan Ridge contour routes on the flanks of Big and Little John Dick Mountains and Stanley Gap contour location between Rocky Mountain and Rich Mountain.

**Opportunities for improving the physical sustainability of Blue Ridge Ranger District trails abound in the potential for:**

- 1. Road-to-trail conversions, especially on high-use or severely degraded routes**
- 2. Trail relocation to moderate, rolling grades that minimize aquatic and riparian impacts**



# Social Setting/Sustainability

The quality of trail experiences in the Blue Ridge District is compromised due to the high percentage of forest management routes employed as trails. These linear corridors do not help visitors forge an emotional connection with the forest resources nearly as well as rolling contour, narrow corridors that also minimize resource impacts. In the absence of better alternatives, managers and trail users accept this condition. However the objective shortcomings of the trail system from a resource impact and experiential quality is quite clear.

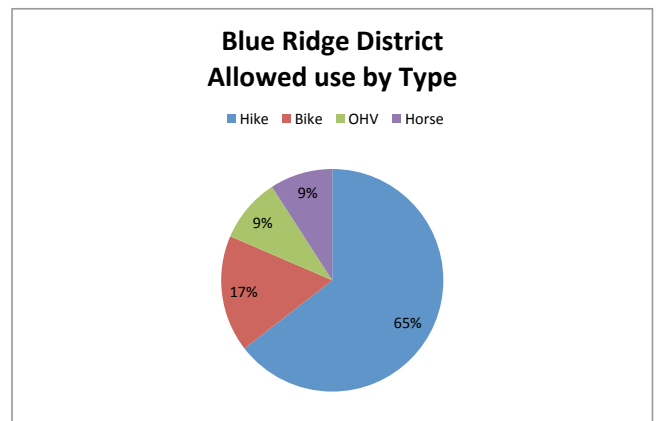
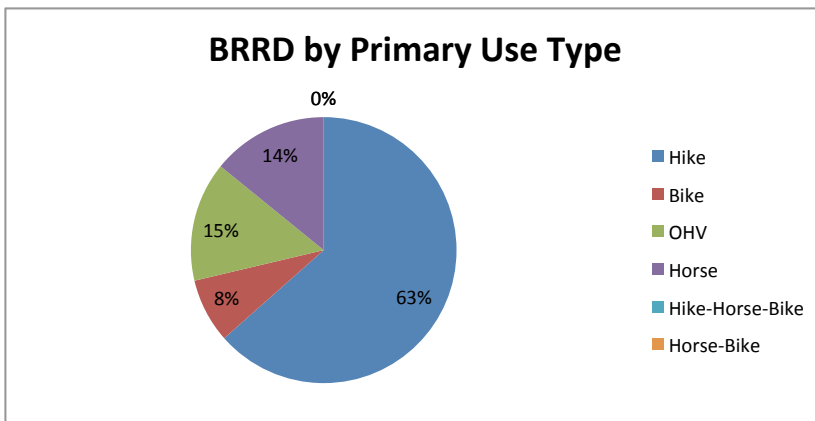
Use conflict is a product of goal interference. Forest recreation goals are quite diverse and can include exercise, serenity, resource appreciation, socializing with friends and family, etc. Conflicts typically result from overcrowding combined with negative trail conditions. Flaws in trail design/construction result in situations where startling, collision, or interruptions are possible. Shortcutting and social spur trails develop where trail users are not expediently routed in desirable ways or where trail conditions are difficult to traverse. This unintended development can cause resource damage and harm to the aesthetic and functional elements of the trail's setting. Insufficient public access and visitor management at trailheads, camping areas, waterfalls, and fishing streams cause undo vegetation trampling and subsequent erosion.

Overcrowding and subsequent conflicts on the Blue Ridge Ranger District are a concern on short, high-quality destination trails and on shared-use trails. The short destination trails are generally not constructed or maintained to a Class 4 level and the lack of adequate, accessible trail corridor is resulting in resource damage due to off-trail hiking, and recreation activity associated with these high use trails.

Shared-use trails are not prevalent enough to meet current non-hiking demand. The shared-use trails that are present are not designed in such a way to accommodate the usage numbers currently or expected in the future. This is especially true in the Blue Ridge area, which is popular with visitors drawn to area reservoirs and small towns, which in turn are increasingly dependent on recreation as a growing source of tourism for sustainable economic development.

**Opportunities for improvement in this situation, outside of converting old roads to trails and more sustainable trail design and construction, include:**

- 1. Enhanced shared-use trail system development near Developed Recreation Areas**
- 2. Partnerships with local counties/municipalities to improve the sustainability and visitor access to destinations such as waterfalls, fishing streams, and panoramic views.**



# Managerial Setting/Sustainability

Blue Ridge Ranger District trails assessed in this project show signs of very sporadic and often ineffective maintenance. Forest Service management of the trail corridor lacks the necessary staff allotment to achieve the required maintenance on an annual basis. Contracted work consisted mostly of replacement of existing water management structures, and volunteer-led work was minimal in quantity and low in quality. As with the social sustainability, the public has generally accepted the quality of the managerial setting without a better example for comparison.

Trail management is a human resource-intensive process, especially with mounting maintenance backlogs of unsustainable trails. A remedy to this situation is possible, but is dependent on significant and strategic public involvement. First, more volunteers need to become involved in managing the trails that provide so many societal benefits. This compliments scarce Forest Service resources and leads to a broader understanding and partnerships in sustainable land management. Second, citizens and smaller government entities must effectively lobby for the importance of sustainable recreation and demonstrate a commitment to partnership with resources and advocacy that improve the situation. In both situations, collaborative partnerships are the only means to short- and long-term improvements in recreational and resource quality.

With population generally increasing across northern Georgia and southern Tennessee, it is likely that the Blue Ridge Ranger District trails and recreation facilities will see even greater visitation in future years. This will put additional strain on existing Forest Service resources and the its tenuously managed system of trails. Better managed trails will be a portion of the solution, but there will be the need for additional trails. The need will be greatest near recreation and tourism portals where users will demand frontcountry, shared-use trail systems that can effectively manage high use without significant Forest-based facility development. Innovative management partnerships are possible and desirable in these locations as the benefits to all parties generate multiple benefits.

**Opportunities for improved managerial sustainability are immediate with:**

- 1. Formalized, strategic trail maintenance partnerships with parties interested in the improvement and involved in the use of specific trails or trail systems.**
- 2. Increased stakeholder outreach to non-federal entities to solicit support for and explain the economic value of enhanced and robust trail systems.**



# TRAIL: ARKAQUAH

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Arkaquah
<b>Trail Number</b>	29
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	1.89
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Track Rock Gap
<b>End Location</b>	Buzzard's Roost Trail
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

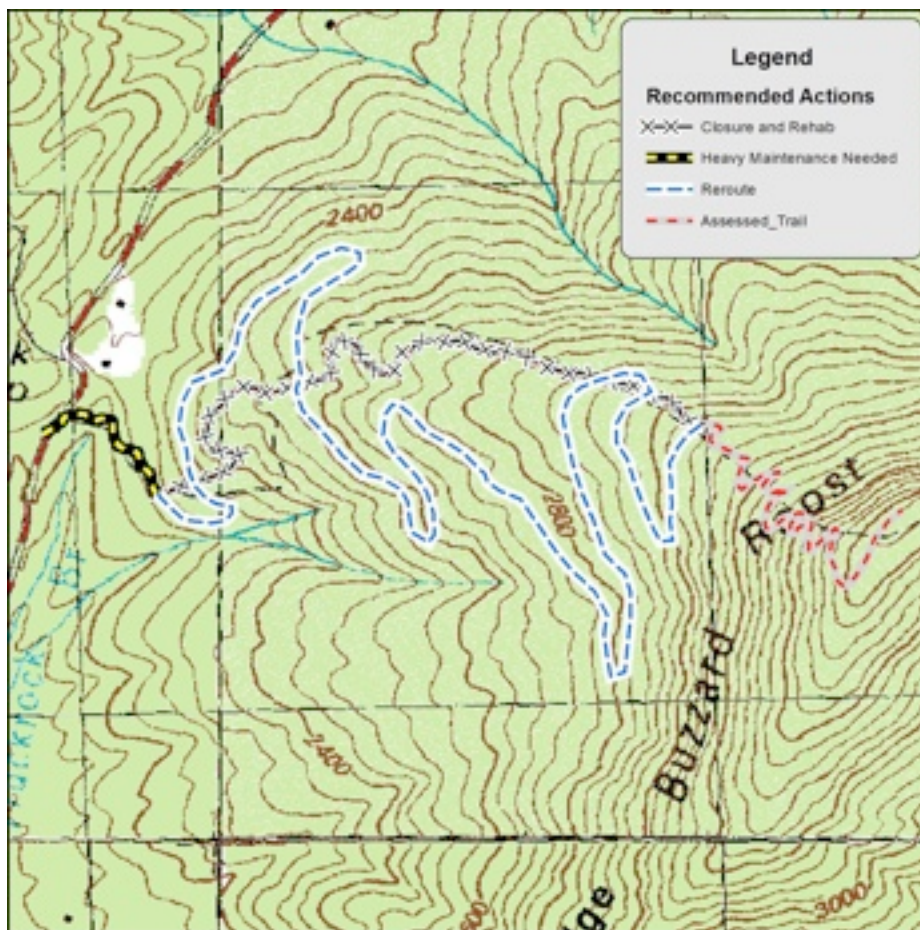
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	Mechanized tools prohibited within Brasstown Wilderness

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	<b>24 (from TMO)</b> 18-36	18-24	
Structure Width (")	18 min.	24-36	Steps should be wide enough to accommodate passing
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Many rutted sections on steep grades w/no water mgt.
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<6/12	Large obstacles present >18" in height. Log water bars will require constant maintenance
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	5-18/25/5-15	Very steep grades currently exist (15-30/45/30-50)
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	Severe cross slope (20-40%) leading to tread creep
Clearing Height/Width (')	<b>10/4 (from TMO)</b> 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Ascends from Track Rock Gap Parking to ridge, then fall-line to base of cliffs/rocks. Trail does not have sustainable grade over most of its course and is very rough relative to its position adjacent to the parking area.
Social Setting	Moderate levels of use. Many visitor-created social trails to “Mayan Ruins”, as well as side trails to cliffs located at switchbacks. Wilderness signage is located approximately 1.5 miles into the trail.
Managerial Setting	Water mgt. only present on lower slopes where alignment/grade is better. Where alignment is bad, such as the “trough”, water mgt. is largely absent or ineffective. Insufficient trail construction and maintenance relative to proximity to parking lot.
Priorities	High- Steeper alignments and water mgt. improved with relocation. High- Formalize side trail and interpretation to “Mayan Ruins” and provide resource protection measures to discourage wandering through the site.



## Representative Photographs:



*Left to Right: Ruins near the trail, track rock near the Trailhead, and Trackrock Gap interpretive display*

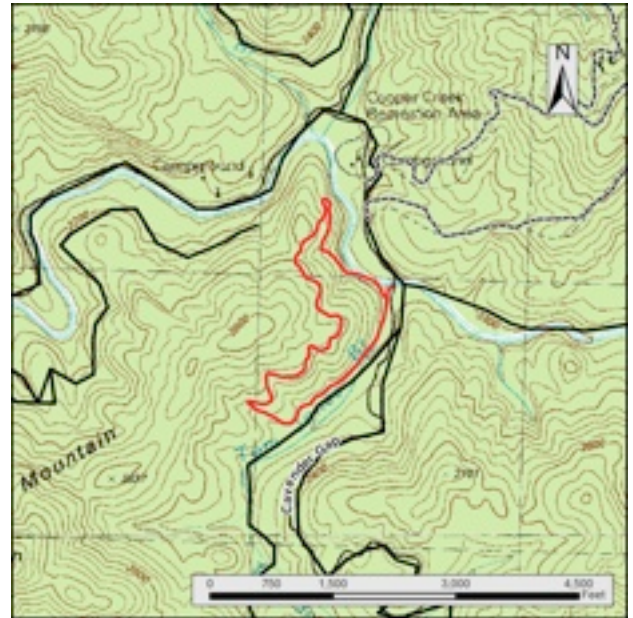


*Left, Right and Below: Poorly constructed and maintained water management structure. Drain is narrow and clogged with sediment and organic litter. Steep grades and lack of functional water management has led to erosion, trail widening, and poor visitor experience.*



# TRAIL: COOPER CREEK

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Cooper Creek
<b>Trail Number</b>	196
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	1.65
<b>Beg. Location</b>	
<b>End Location</b>	
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

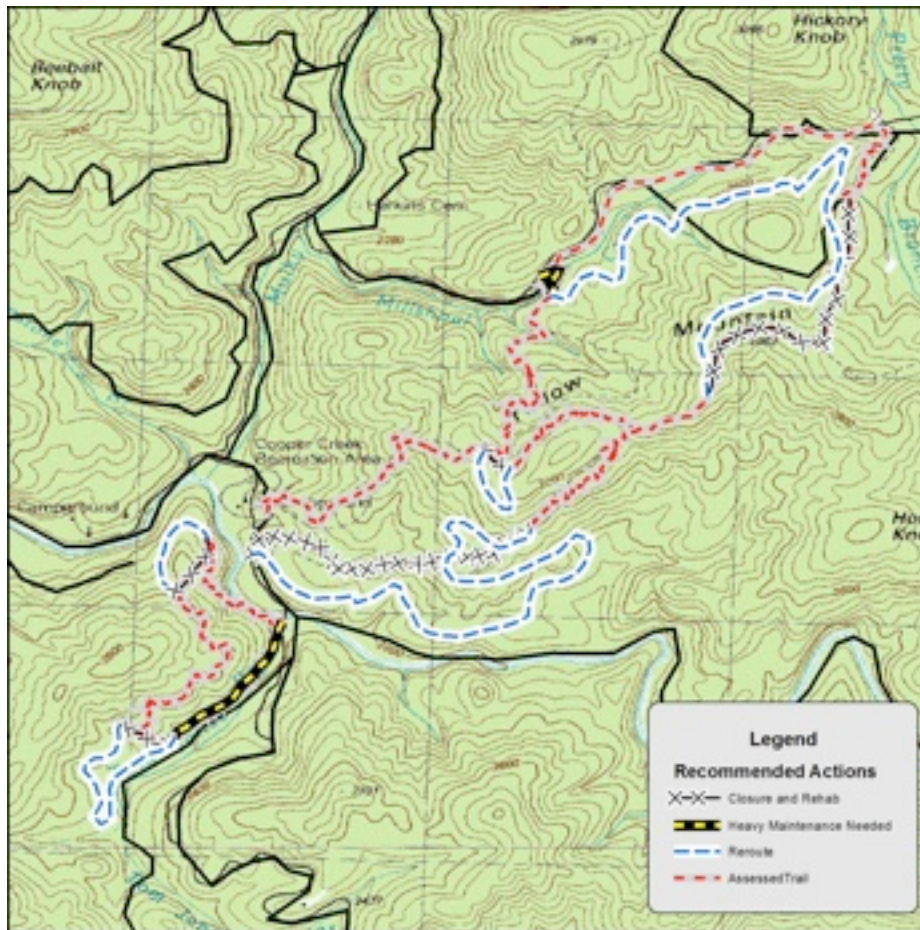
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	No Trail Class in TMO. Recommended TC 3.

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	24 (from TMO) 18-36	18-36	Contour trail is ~18" and sections on old road ~84"
Structure Width (")	18 min.	18 min.	48"-wide foot bridge at TH in need of maintenance
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<3/10	
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	3-15% on old road bed with 15-20% on bench cut trail sections
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO) 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	Large tree blocking corridor near TH
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	



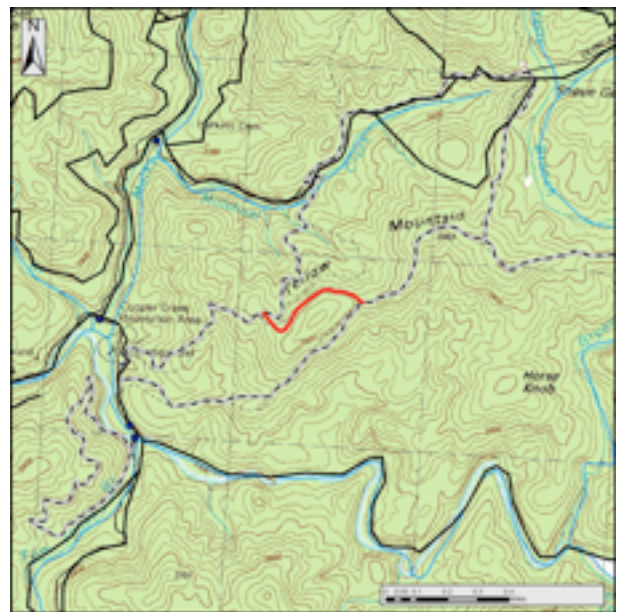
# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Located in close proximity to Cooper Creek Recreation Area. Route employs sections of old road bed for approximately 67% of trail with connections of bench cut singletrack with average grades outside the design parameters for Class 3 hiking trails.
Social Setting	Hiking-only trail loop. Trail does not provide direct connection to Recreation Area. some steeper grades and old road sections degrade from potential recreational experience that caters to typical visitors of developed recreation areas.
Managerial Setting	Water management has not been attempted on benchcut portions of trail- water running down steep trail grades causing erosion. Road portions of trail are challenging to maintain and degrade potential experience. Lack of corridor maintenance and bridge damage near TH gives feeling of lack of management.
Priorities	<p>High- Fortify bridge and clear large blow down near beginning of trail.</p> <p>High- Provide connection to FDTs 89 and 86 to form system of interconnected trails at Cooper Creek Recreation Area</p> <p>Medium- Improved water management on bench cut portion of trail to enhance sustainability.</p> <p>Medium- Consider road-to-trail conversion</p>

# TRAIL: COOPER CREEK CONNECTOR

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Cooper Creek
<b>Trail Number</b>	87
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	0.67
<b>Beg. Location</b>	FDT 89/Mill Shoals Trail
<b>End Location</b>	FDT 86/Yellow Mtn. Trail
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



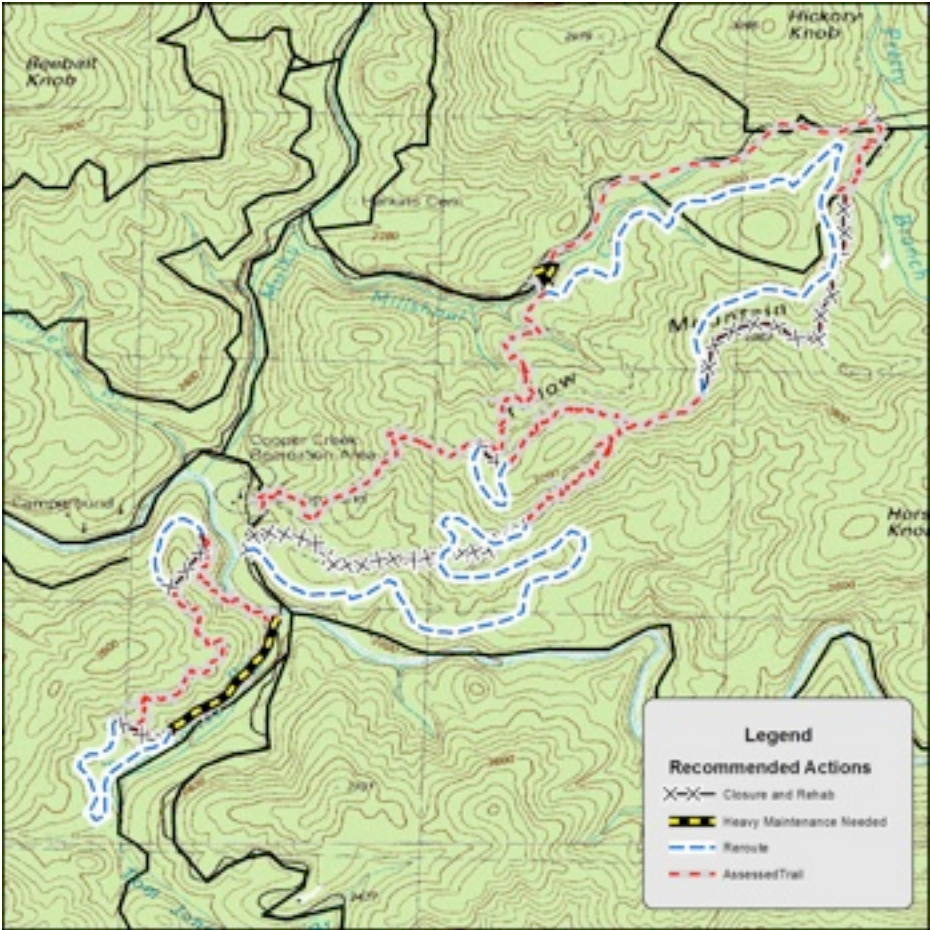
## Travel Management Strategies:

Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	24 (from TMO) 18-36		
Structure Width (")	18 min.		
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization		
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10		
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20		
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15		
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO) 7-8/3-5		
Turn Radius (')	3-6		

# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	
Social Setting	Hike-only trail out of Cooper Creek Recreation Area
Managerial Setting	
Priorities	



## Representative Photographs:



*Left: Signage indicating an interpretive trail*



*Right: Large tree across trail near beginning of route restricts use*

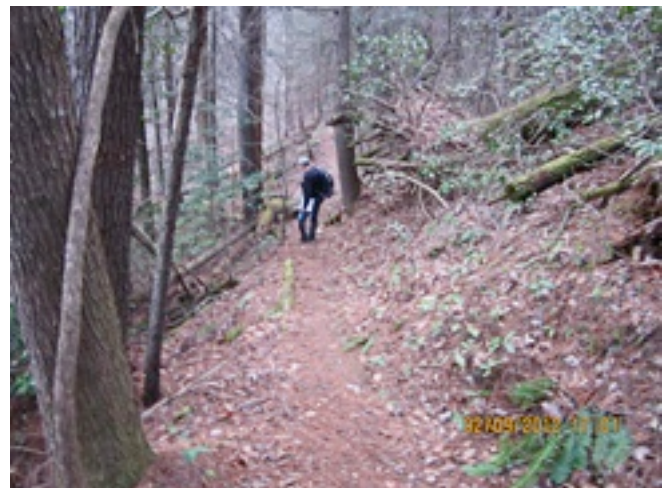


*Above Left: Majority of trail located on old road bed that is a challenge to maintain and does not reflect an intimate wildlife viewing experience*



*Above Right: Wide, undefined trail corridor*

*Right: Benchcut portions of the trail were designed with steep grades that are now experiencing erosion due to a lack of subsequent water management maintenance*



# TRAIL: COOSA BACKCOUNTRY

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Coosa Backcountry Trail
<b>Trail Number</b>	111
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	6.5
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Coosa Bald
<b>End Location</b>	Vogel State Park Boundary
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

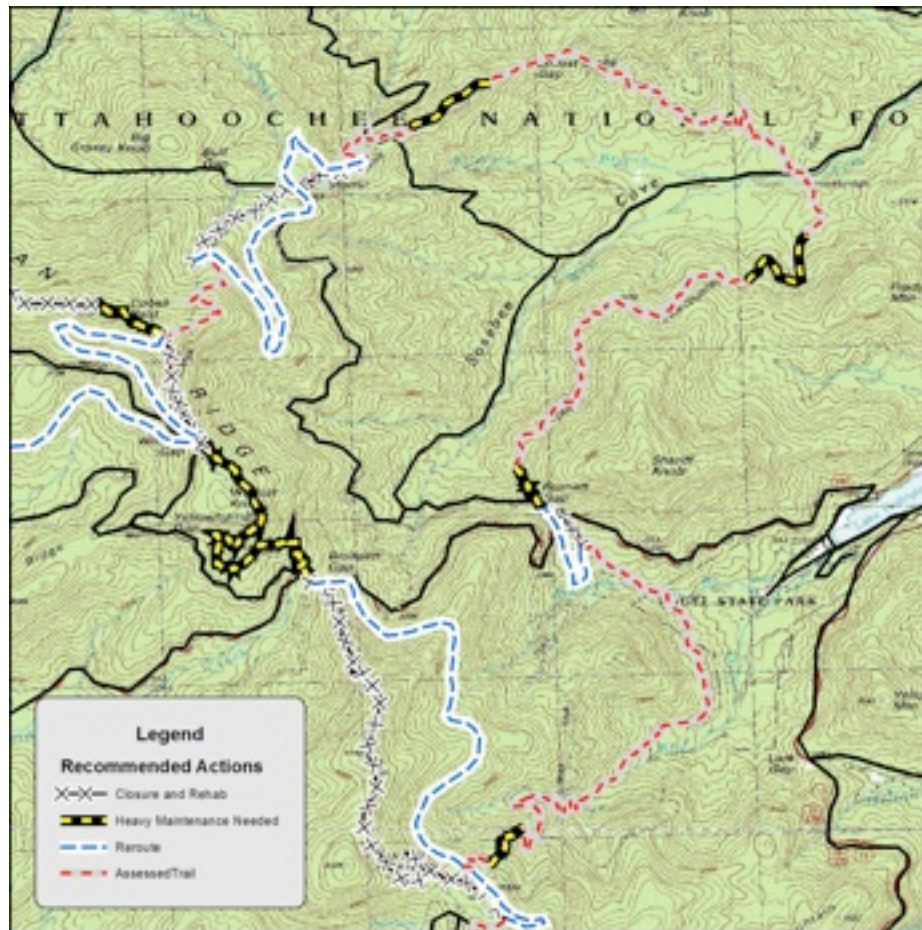
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	<b>24 (from TMO)</b> 12-24 (W), 18-36	18-36	Many segments on old road bed and could use road-trail conversion, esp. Wolf Creek Rd to 180
Structure Width (")	18 min.	18 min.	
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<3/10	Switchbacks in Wilderness rugged with much larger (>8") obstacles and protrusions continuous
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/20	3-12/20/10	Grade too high for sustainability in many locations, need relocations
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	Switchbacks in Wilderness at 20%
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO) 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Design/Construction generally acceptable and appropriate to use levels. Some areas with exceeding grades on climbs and descents that are unnecessary and could be routed on a rolling contour.
Social Setting	Low use, except near State Park and Wilderness, where use is heavier. Outside Wilderness trail is more formal, while quite rough within, raising sustainability as well as consistency of recreational experience issues.
Managerial Setting	Obvious water mgt and relocation work in recent years needs to continue/expand. Better signage at access points would provide improved recreational experience.
Priorities	High- Improved signage Medium- Water mgt. and relocations of above-grade sections of trail Medium- Road-to-trail conversion to improve drainage, shrink corridor, and provide backcountry consistency for improved trail experience.

## Representative Photographs:



*Left: Rolling contour, sidehill location is very sustainable with little maintenance*

*Right: Unimproved crossing that trail users have attempted to improve with loose logs*

*Below: Visually interesting “gateway” feature*







*Log steps on steep grades exhibiting scour erosion due to lack of water management. If steps are necessary for footing, the trail is far too steep*



*Lack of defined and constructed trail tread has users compacting unnecessary amounts of soil and exposing roots*



*Unimproved wet and slippery drainage crossing. Trail could be relocated to a better location to minimize potential sedimentation*



*Turnpike built above seep showing signs of degradation*

# TRAIL: DESOTO FALLS

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	DeSoto Falls
<b>Trail Number</b>	18
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	0.95
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Lower Falls
<b>End Location</b>	Upper Falls
<b>Trail Class</b>	4- Highly Developed
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

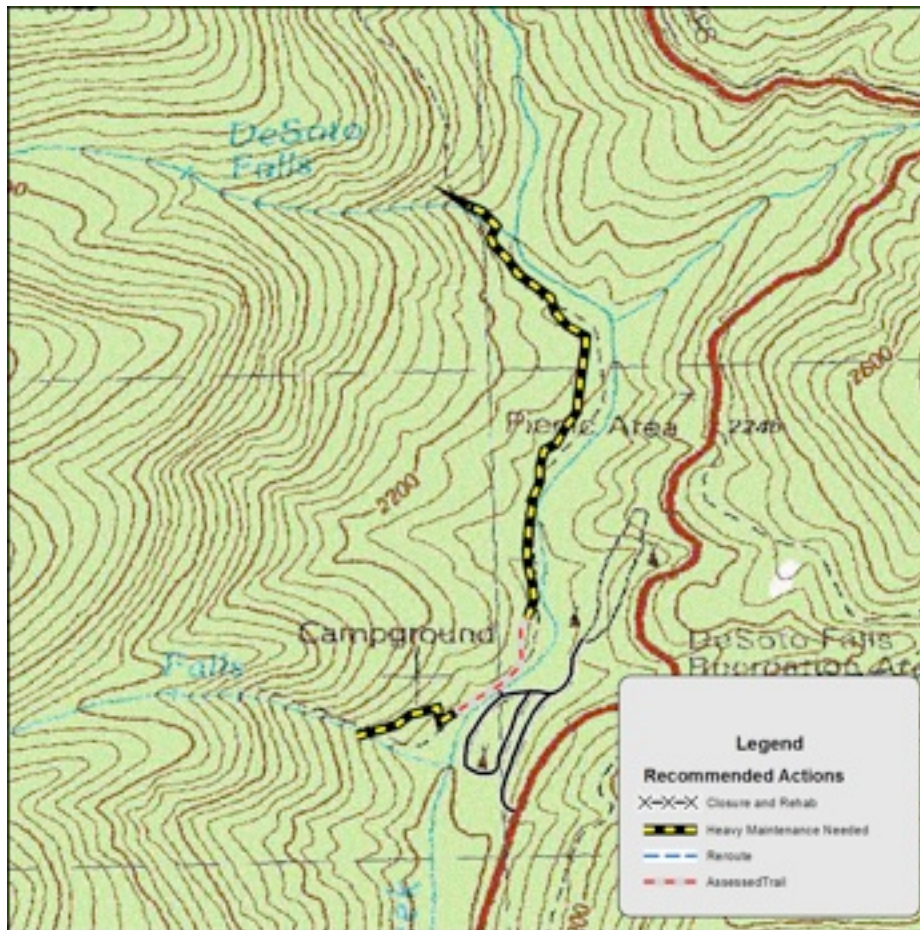
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	24 (from TMO) 48-72	48	Mostly 36-48 currently, wider on northbound section on old road/railroad bed.
Structure Width (")	36	48	48" wide bridges and viewing platforms in place
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow & import, grading for minor rough	Native, w/borrow & import, grading for minor rough	Some small sections of gravel have been employed for stabilization
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/8		Many 4-6" protrusions and a few 18+" obstacles along with a few larger steps on approach to falls.
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	2-10/15/5-20		About 15% of trail steeper than target grades with max grades ~20%
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	3-7/10		
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO) 8-10/4-6		
Turn Radius (')	4-8		



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Northbound- Adopted old road/railroad corridor that steepens last 100' to falls. Southbound- Generally steeper sidehill construction with many water bars and steps.
Social Setting	Very high-use destination area and popular w/campers spring through fall. Does not currently meet needs of Class 4 trail relative to safety and risk management as well as high use levels.
Managerial Setting	Many bridges are in need of inspection and decking replacement. Hand rail and steps at falls need improvement. Water management structures largely failing and recent maintenance of structures is insignificant. Open culverts require clean out.
Priorities	<p>High- Attend to dying hemlock and other hazard trees threatening structures and safety on northbound leg. Inspect, augment, or re-deck bridges. Repair or replace steps/handrail on southbound leg.</p> <p>High- Add significant surfacing to reduce roughness</p> <p>High- Eliminate water bars, add many more functioning rolling grade dips to better manage water.</p> <p>High- Signage maintenance needed.</p>



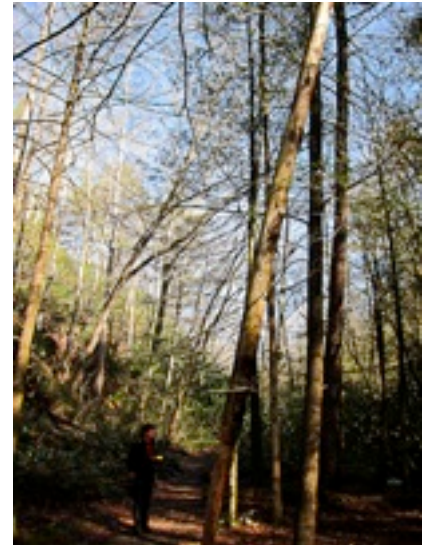
## Representative Photographs:



*Log water bars and steps are being undercut by water flow. Rotting logs leave exposed rebar which pose a significant risk to trail users.*



*Trailhead sign at campground*



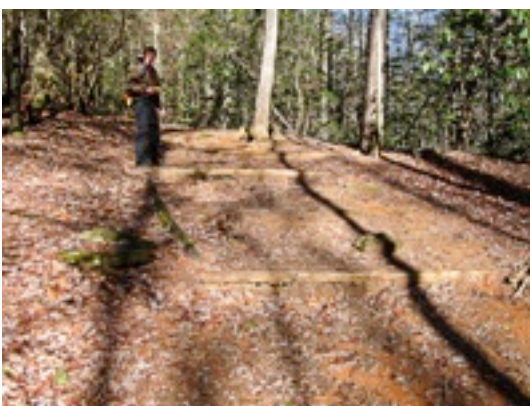
*Hazard tree along the trails to DeSoto Falls*



*Viewing platform at the "middle" falls*



*Piling under the lower falls viewing platform*



*DeSoto Falls receives a lot of visitor traffic, this wide section of trail could benefit from surfacing and water management*



*An open culvert along surfaced trail at DeSoto falls*

# TRAIL: DUNCAN RIDGE

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Duncan Ridge
<b>Trail Number</b>	4
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	
<b>Beg. Location</b>	AT/BMT jct.
<b>End Location</b>	Toccoa River bridge
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	24 (from TMO) 18-36	18-36	36" tread only necessary on slopes steeper than 60%
Structure Width (")	18 min.	18 min.	
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Relocation work near Owens Gap mostly half-bench construction- insufficient for Trail Class 3
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<6/14	Many larger obstacles than DP values exist on eroded roots
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	Ascent to Duncan Ridge from AT well above sustainable grade w/sustained 30%+
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO)	7-8/3-5	
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Trail section has sustainable, contour elements around Little and Big John Dick Mountains, bracketed by unsustainable fall-line sections. Ascent to Duncan Ridge and road bed descent to Toccoa River too steep for sustainability.
Social Setting	Low to moderate use due to colocation with portion of BMT. Backcountry setting and viewshed potential is incredible, but point-to-point access deters use. If improved and loop created, could be signature trail in Forest. Relocations and improved construction would handle expanded use and viably bike use as well.
Managerial Setting	Trail signed well. Contour sections will need little maintenance, but lack of design in Duncan Ridge ascent and sufficient maintenance on descent to Toccoa River significantly have potential for significant resource degradation.
Priorities	High- Maintenance and/or relocation off old road bed of descent to Toccoa River Medium- Relocation of Duncan Ridge ascent

# TRAIL: DUNCAN RIDGE

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Duncan Ridge
<b>Trail Number</b>	4
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Toccoa River
<b>End Location</b>	Skeenah Gap
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

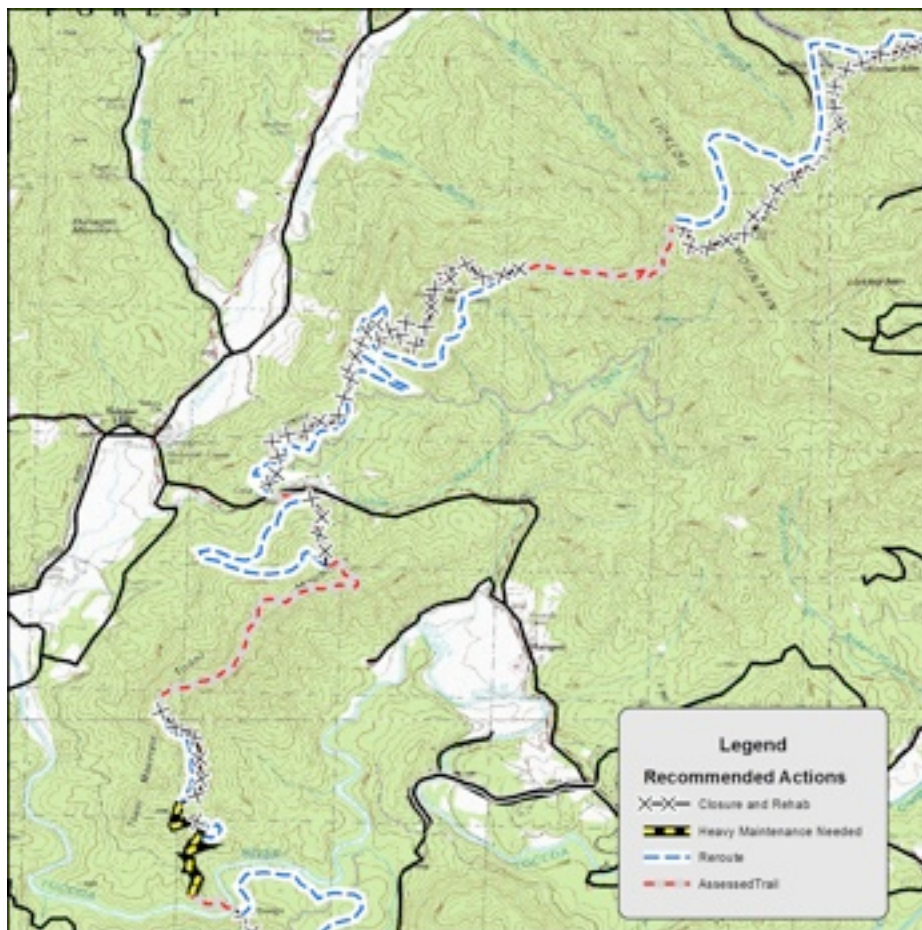
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width	<b>24 (from TMO)</b> 18-36	24-36, depending on slope	Some old road bed-based portions. Most constructed tread 20-24", 1/2-3/4 benchcut w/some sloughing
Structure Width	18 min.	36	
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Eroded to bedrock and eroding near on portion near swinging bridge
Protrusions/Obstacles	<3/10	<6/14	Many blowdowns N of HWY 60
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	Long sections of consistent 20-25% (S of HWY 60), much fall-line (N of HWY 60) with poor drainage
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	
Clearing Height/Width/Shoulder	<b>10/4 (from TMO)</b> 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	
Turn Radius	3-6	3-6	Currently, switchbacks have 1.5-2' radius



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Backcountry setting w/no loop option. Some old road bed-based sections with poor drainage and many sections exceeding grade. South of HWY 60, trail is poorly designed and 1/2-3/4 benchcut construction is already experiencing sloughing that further narrows tread.
Social Setting	Hiking only and seems to see very little use. Could accommodate bike use with tread improvements, especially if loop opportunities were created.
Managerial Setting	Drainage management is poor throughout entire section, especially north of HWY 60. Constructed trail south of HWY 60 is above grade, has few grade reversals, and requires drainage management, and has resulted in erosion down to bedrock in one occasion.
Priorities	<p>Medium- Relocation onto contour north of HWY 60</p> <p>Medium- Smaller relocations and drainage management south of HWY 60</p> <p>Medium- Increased parking access to accommodate increased use of trail</p>

# TRAIL: DUNCAN RIDGE

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Duncan Ridge
<b>Trail Number</b>	4
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Skeenah Gap
<b>End Location</b>	Mulky Gap
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	Mechanized tools prohibited

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	<b>24 (from TMO)</b> 18-36	24-36, depending on slope	24" width rarely achieved, even where 1/2 benchcut
Structure Width (")	18 min.	36	
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Most situations tread is barely distinguished from surrounding ground
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<6/14	Obstacles generally <12"
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	Sustained grades of 30+% for 1,000' or more on many occasions
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	1/2 benchcut sections mostly >10%, with many areas sloughing and 20+%
Clearing Height/Width (')	<b>10/4 (from TMO)</b> 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	A number of old blowdowns (bark gone) indicating lack of corridor maintenance
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	

# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Spectacular backcountry setting w/potential views of surrounding mountains. Trail design for sustainability non-existent and steeply (30+%) runs lay-of-land for majority of route. The few constructed sections are 1/2 benchcut to ~18" wide with some cross slope sloughing to 15-20%.
Social Setting	Hiking only, but use is barely apparent, which is fortunate as lack of use has not yet led to excessive compaction and erosion. Some evidence of horse use.
Managerial Setting	Little or no maintenance in last number of years. 1/2 benchcut is not up to design parameters or reasonable quality. Design non-existent, except to achieve the top of each mountain. Low use renders trail far below CL 3 standards.
Priorities	Medium- Major relocations of pointless ascents/descents to reduce grades, provide consistent trail tread width and cross slope



# TRAIL: DUNCAN RIDGE

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Duncan Ridge
<b>Trail Number</b>	4
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Mulky Gap
<b>End Location</b>	AT @ Slaughter Mtn.
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	Mechanized tools prohibited

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	<b>24 (from TMO)</b> 18-36	24-36, depending on slope	Tread indistinct and typically less than 24"
Structure Width (")	18 min.	36	
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilizatin	
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<6/14	Generally obstacles less than 12"
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	Many continuous sections of 30-50% grade
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	
Clearing Height/Width (')	<b>10/4 (from TMO)</b> 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	Little evidence of corridor maintenance
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	Currently 1-2'

# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Spectacular backcountry setting, especially where trail ascends to top of Coosa Bald. Lack of design or construction other than blazes, with lay-of-land, oftentimes very steep alignment to top of each mountain.
Social Setting	Hiking only trail that sees minimal to low use. Tread increasingly indistinct going west from Coosa Bald.
Managerial Setting	No indications of maintenance as trail is not defined and does not nearly attain CL 3 design parameters.
Priorities	Medium- Major relocations of pointless ascents/descents to reduce grades, provide consistent trail tread width and cross slope

# TRAIL: DUNCAN RIDGE

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Duncan Ridge
<b>Trail Number</b>	4_5
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Jct. FDT 111/Coosa
<b>End Location</b>	Jct. AT near Wolfpen Gap
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

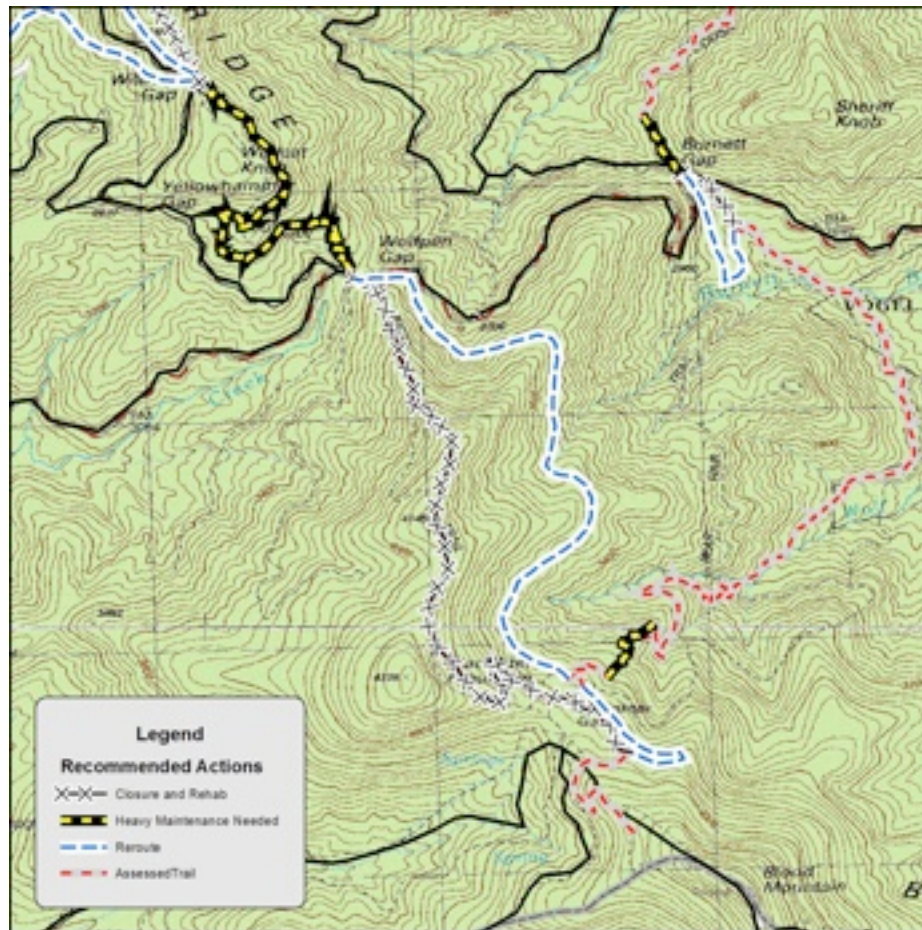
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	Mechanized tools prohibited

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	<b>24 (from TMO)</b> 24-36	24-36, w/36 on slope >60%	Old road bed sections on fall line, 60-96" wide on FDT 111 to 180, ~12" from FDT 180 to AT
Structure Width (")	18 min.	36	
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<6/14	
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	Old road bed w/30+% for >300' multiple times, extended sections of 40-50% nearing AT
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	
Clearing Height/Width (')	<b>10/4 (from TMO)</b> 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	Current turn radii are less than 2' and poorly constructed



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Backcountry-style trail appropriate to use from FDT 180 to Wildcat Gap, w/ inappropriate wide, rocky, steep old road bed to FDT 111. Wide-ranging design specifications due to adoption of old road beds as route and unimproved condition in connection with AT.
Social Setting	Hiking-only trail. This section sees some increased signs of use due to Vogel SP proximity, but still mainly appeals only to very experienced hiker/backpackers. Except for AT approach, section could handle add'l managed use of bikes if relocations for sustainability and user experience were implemented.
Managerial Setting	Functioning relocation from FDT 180 to Wildcat Gap. Trail not managing water on old road bed from Wildcat Gap to jct. w/FDT 111 and needs relocation. Non-constructed and maintained from 180 to Slaughter Gap descent (indistinct tread, downfall in corridor).
Priorities	High- Relocation from Wildcat Gap to jct. w/FDT 111. Medium- Establish sustainable trail from FDT 180 to jct. w/AT.



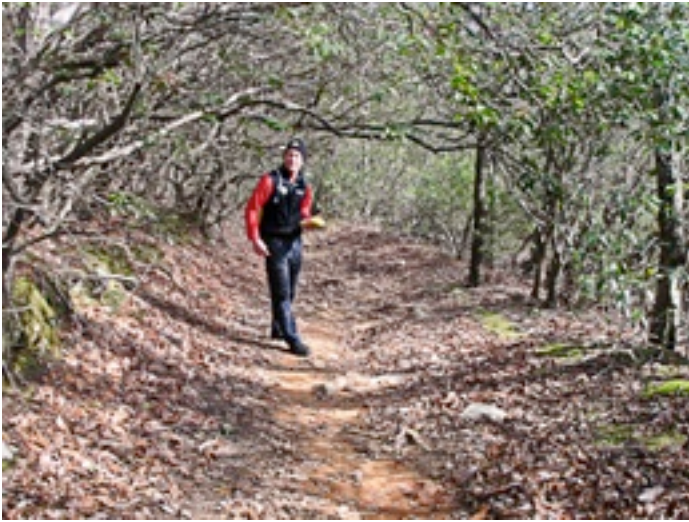
## Representative Photographs:



*The Duncan Ridge trail contains many incredible ridgeline views, but the most of the trail has little construction, very steep and unsustainable grades, and so little use that following the route is sometimes difficult*







*Old, steep road bed employed for a portion of the trail near the Toccoa River. Incised nature and lack of water management increases erosion. Lack of corridor maintenance currently has vegetation at a height of six feet*



*Coosa Bald is reached from the west after a long and very steep climb with trail grades exceeding 35% for sustained stretches*



*Lack of trail construction and corridor management leads to navigation difficulties*



*Some attempts have been made to locate the trail on the sidehill. In most cases, partial bench construction and subsequent sloughing of the fill material has resulted in trail treads as narrow as 12"*

# TRAIL: LAKE BLUE RIDGE

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Lake Blue Ridge
<b>Trail Number</b>	105
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	0.59
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Picnic area parking lot
<b>End Location</b>	Picnic area parking lot
<b>Trail Class</b>	4- Highly Developed
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

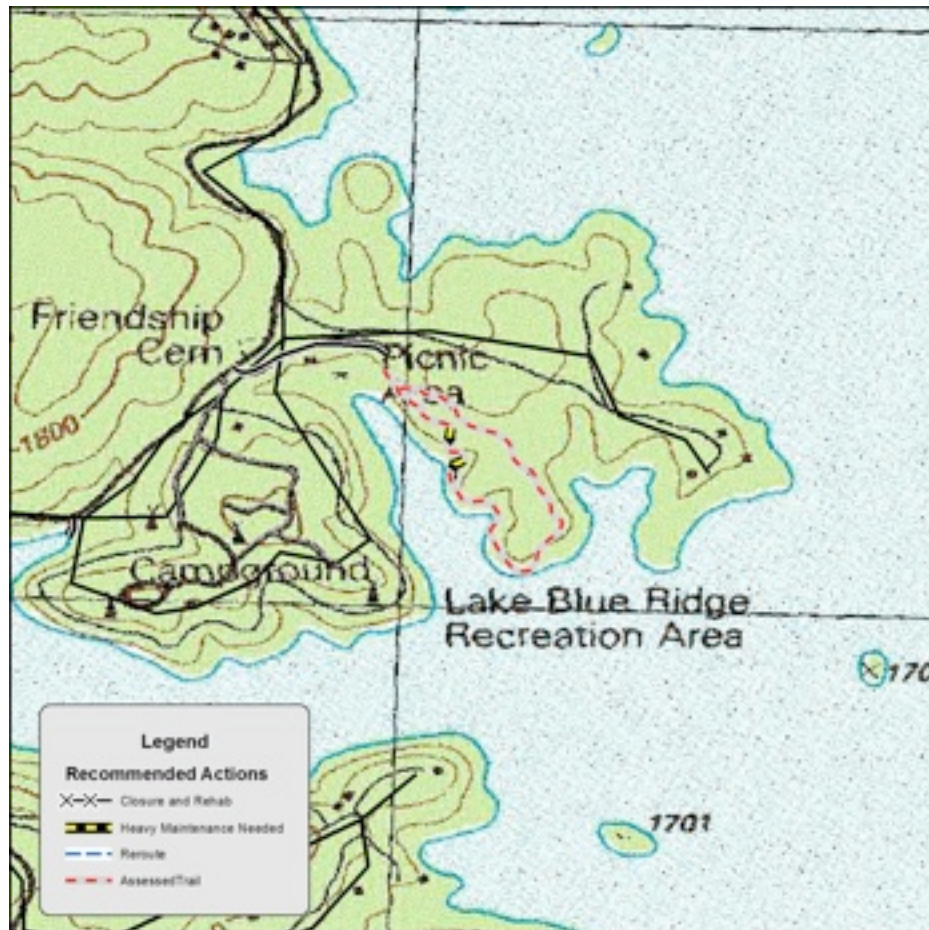
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	No regulatory signage defining travel management at parking lot

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width	<b>24" (TMO)</b> 24-60"	36"	Consistent 36" tread would increase accessibility
Structure Width	36" (min.)	48"	48" (existing bridge)
Tread Surface	Native w/improved, minor roughness	Improved over entire length	Native, with pea gravel on ~.15 mi., 3/8" - surfacing would reduce protrusions and increase tread firmness
Protrusions/Obstacles	<3"/8"	<3"/no obstacles	< 3", with a few greater than 6", removal of notched log and rock step would increase accessibility
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	2-10/15/5-20	2-5/8/5	~5/20/10, a number of fall-line sections increase the risk of erosion difficulty of trail
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	3-7/10	2-5/5	
Clearing Height/Width/Shoulder	<b>10'/4' (TMO)</b> <b>8-10/4-6/1-1.5</b>	10/4/1/1.5	
Turn Radius	4-8'	8'	If turns were necessary with relocations to reduce grade, radii should be sufficiently large



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Trail provides predominantly lakeshore or bank fishing access with numerous spur trails leading to water edge. Trail could better serve picnic area use by extending to picnic area and increasing distance. Trail is informal relative to area setting (numerous lakeshore homes visible from trail and driveways near access).
Social Setting	Pedestrian use only, but no kiosk or regulatory sign present (broken) at beginning of trail. Very little use apparent beyond lakeshore point. Not currently serving visitors seeking lakeshore/fishing experience in a sustainable manner.
Managerial Setting	Managed Use issues in TMO (motorized uses allowed). Trail is in sound condition but not providing sustainable lakeshore access.
Priorities	<p>High- Kiosk and regulatory signage at picnic area parking lot</p> <p>Intermediate- Consider relocations to provide improved lakeshore access</p> <p>Intermediate- Consider surface and grade improvements to provide accessible experience</p> <p>Low- Consider trail length extension and direct connection to picnic area</p>

## Representative Photographs:



*Above: Bridge over ditch near parking lot*

*Right: Minimally constructed trail with some sustained grades of 20%. Combination of factors do not reflect a Class 4 trail experience and accessibility and lake access could be fundamentally improved.*



# TRAIL: LEN FOOTE HIKE INN

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Len Foote Hike Inn Trail
<b>Trail Number</b>	174A
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	5.5
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Amicalola Falls SP
<b>End Location</b>	Amicalola Creek Road
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

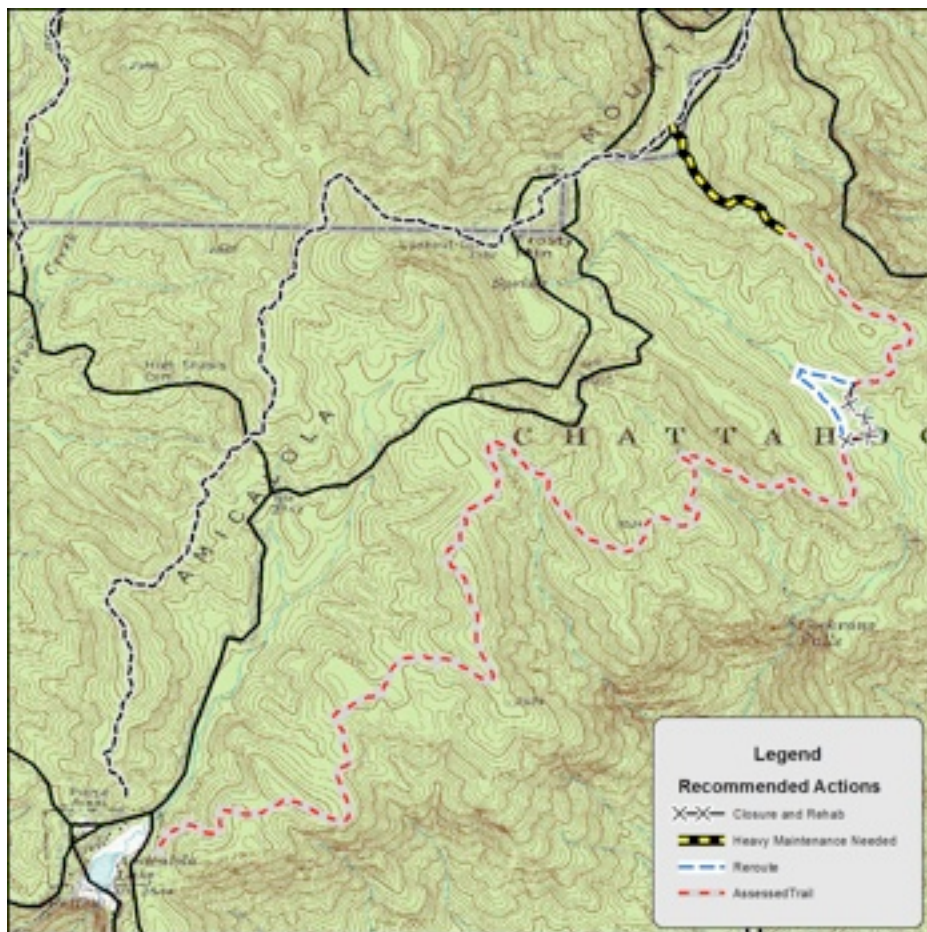
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	Current TMO lists motorcycle and atv as managed uses.

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	24 (from TMO) 18-36	24-36	Tread currently 24" for most of route, increasing to 36" near the Hike Inn
Structure Width (")	18 min.	18 min.	Double hand-railed, 48" bridge as well as 4-12" bog bridges
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/ borrow for stabilization	Very short raised causeway and ~25' hardened section of tread
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<3/10	A number of high rock water bars and steps great than 10"
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	A number of steep sections of ~25% grade that comprise around 20% of trail.
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO) 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	Small lengths in rhododendron that are 6-7' in height
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Largely well-designed contour trail with highly developed TH at Amicalola Falls SP. Mostly on contour except for ridgeline-running section at northern end. Structures functioning, tread outsloped.
Social Setting	Hiking-only trail that has a strong and highly visited destination of the Len Foote Hike Inn.
Managerial Setting	Trail is well-maintained for most part. Bog bridges could be improved (replaced and widened) or trail relocated further upslope to avoid need.
Priorities	Medium- Replace and enhance bog bridges or relocate trail on available side slope to avoid the wet area.

## Representative Photographs:



*Top: Trailhead signage at Amicalola Falls State Park*



*Middle: Len Foote Hike Inn, 4.8 miles past State Park Trailhead*

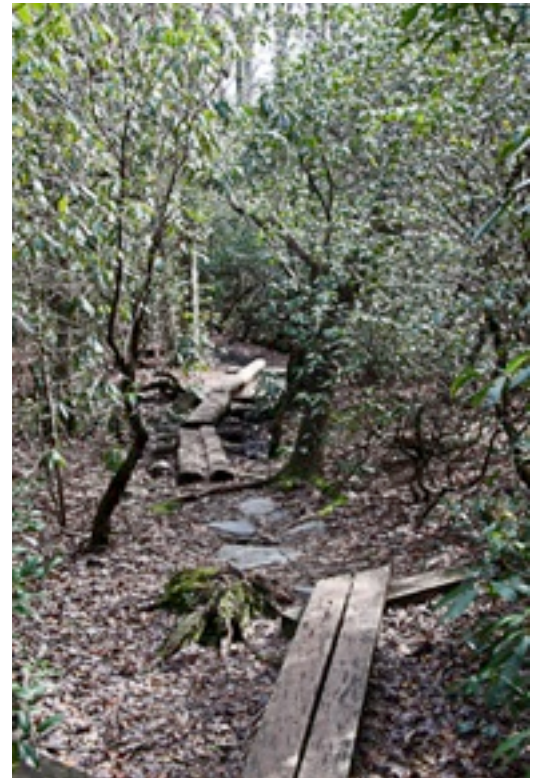


*Bottom: Rustic, backcountry style bridge structure that is sufficiently constructed, but does not conform to design parameters and may not be appropriate for the high level of frontcountry use.*





*Sustainable, rolling contour trail*



*Turnpike in moist portion of the forest*



*Durable and well-constructed stone steps employed where design grades were too steep and erosion/traction became issues. Water management above these structures limits scour erosion between steps.*





# TRAIL: LOWER GREEN MOUNTAIN

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Aska Trail System
<b>Trail Number</b>	165D
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	1.0
<b>Beg. Location</b>	Upper Green Mtn. jct.
<b>End Location</b>	Deep Gap TH/Aska Rd.
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Bike



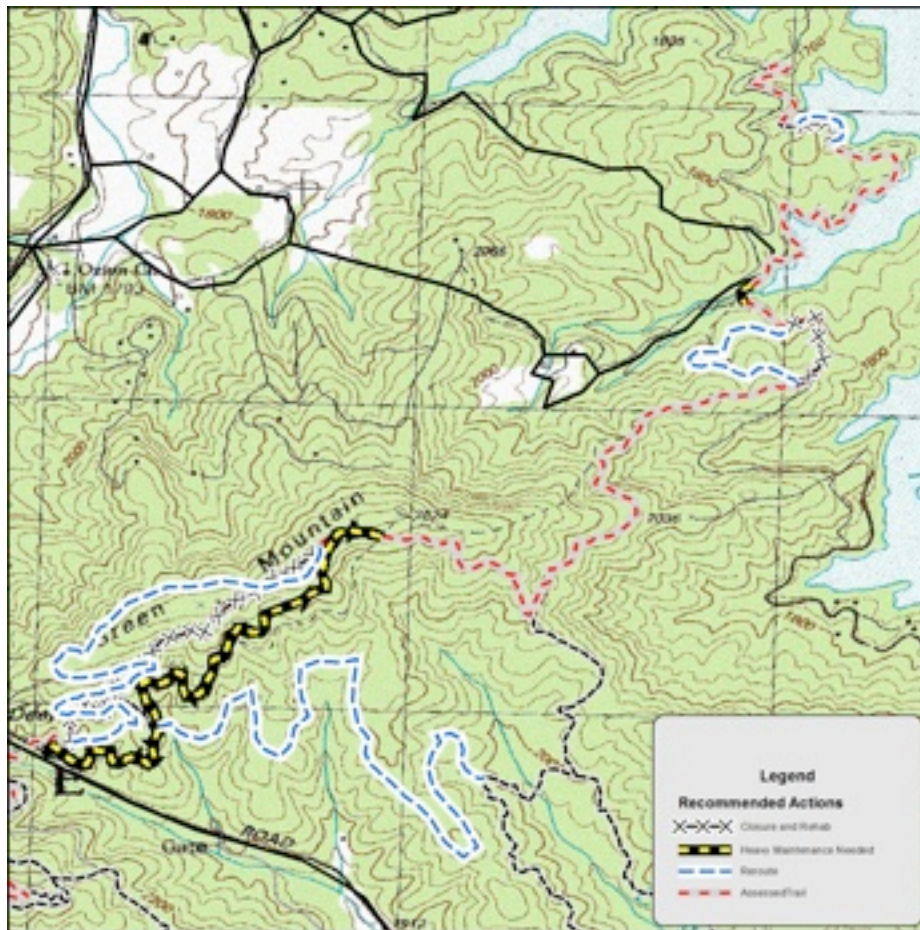
## Travel Management Strategies:

Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	Y	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width	<b>24" (from TMO)</b> 18-36"	24"	Trail is entirely located on old road bed w/tread widths of 48-96"
Structure Width	36" min.	36" min.	
Tread Surface	Native, some rough	Native, some rough	
Protrusions/Obstacles	<3"/10"	<3/10	
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-10/15/10-20	3-10/15/10-20	Trail fits within design parameters
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	3-8/10	3-8/10	Outslope lacking on vast majority of trail
Clearing Height/Width/Shoulder	<b>10/4 (from TMO)</b> 8/5-6	8/5-6	Old road bed corridor is clear for majority of trail and averages 8' wide
Turn Radius	4-8	4-8	

# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Trail in relatively good condition, maintenance recently completed and functioning sufficiently, but most drainage structures are not located in best locations or have better than average construction quality.
Social Setting	As preferred walking route up Green Mtn., this trail/road could have very high speed differentials and has a few potentially high-speed and relatively blind corners. Signage issues (two arrows w/three potential travel directions) and additional open travel corridors at Upper Green Mtn. junction creates navigation challenge.
Managerial Setting	Recent maintenance is reasonably functional, but drains are often shallow and already filling with sediment. No attempts have been made to reduce the width of the maintenance or travel corridor. Sign at Upper Green junction is not secured in ground and provides destination names not used on trail system map.
Priorities	<p>High- Replace signage at Upper Green Mtn. trail junction</p> <p>Medium- Road to trail conversion of entire route</p> <p>Medium- Consider lower elevation connector trail to trailhead/loops north of Aska Road to disperse use and provide lower challenge recreational experience.</p>

# TRAIL: Upper Green Mountain

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Aska Trail System
<b>Trail Number</b>	165C
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	3.6
<b>Beg. Location</b>	FSR 711/Bear Rd.
<b>End Location</b>	Deep Gap TH/Aska Rd.
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Bike



## Travel Management Strategies:

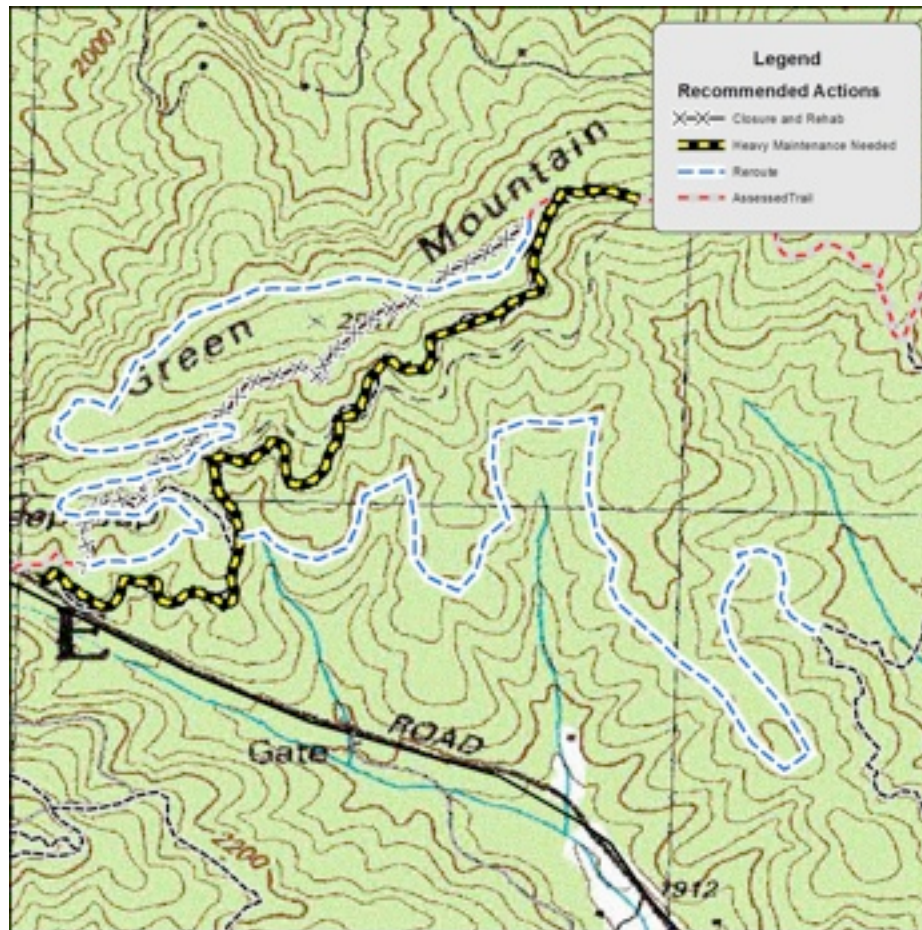
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	Y	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width	<b>24" (from TMO)</b> 18-36"	24"	
Structure Width	36" min.	36" min.	No structures currently present or necessary
Tread Surface	Native, some rough	Native, some rough	No areas where soft/wet tread present
Protrusions/Obstacles	<3"/10"	<6"/12" (section nearest Deep Gap)	Trail section nearest Deep Gap TH significantly rougher than remainder of trail
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-10/15/10-20	5-12/25/10-30	Increase in keeping with current conditions of trail section near Deep Gap TH
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	3-8/10	3-8/10	
Clearing Height/Width/Shoulder	<b>10/4 (from TMO)</b> 8/5-6	8/4	Not necessary to clear to 10' in height when pack/saddle use prohibited
Turn Radius	4-8	3-6	No turns currently, but potential relocations of steep pitches may necessitate



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Trail in relatively good condition, maintenance on wide portions of route recently completed and functioning. Close proximity to recent development has led to numerous spur trails. Private property easement (?) navigation is somewhat confusing for trail users.
Social Setting	Increase in pedestrian use (neighborhood access) and spur trails make use management challenging. Further increases in use by both types of trail users increases the probability of user conflicts.
Managerial Setting	Navigation to TH near lake very challenging as FDR 711 not signed and pull-off at trail only marked with carsonite post. Section near Deep Gap TH could be downgraded to Class 2 to better separate use and improve experience. Some relocations of steep gradients would decrease the need for future maintenance.
Priorities	<p>High- Trail definition/signage at private property incursion, at Lower/Upper Green intersection, and connectivity at Deep Gap TH</p> <p>High- Sign FDR 711 for navigation purposes, better define trail entrance, close or improve social routes to trail/lake/neighbor private property</p> <p>Medium- Relocations on steep fall-line sections</p> <p>Medium- Larger water crossing needs armoring</p> <p>Medium- Consider downgrade to Class 2 from Deep Gap TH to Lower Green int.</p>

## Representative Photographs:



*Road crossings and significant mileage on high speed road to connect Stanley Gap Trail to Green and Flat Creek Trails detracts from recreational quality and safety*



*Unnecessarily steep trail suffering from erosion*



*Adopted old road beds form a significant portion of the trail mileage. Previous use has left many portions insloped and channeling water, leading to erosion and/or more intensive maintenance needs.*



*Unsigned, open corridors at Upper/Lower Green Mountain intersection hinders trail system navigability*



# TRAIL: MILL SHOALS

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Mill Shoals Trail
<b>Trail Number</b>	89
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	1.71
<b>Beg. Location</b>	
<b>End Location</b>	
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



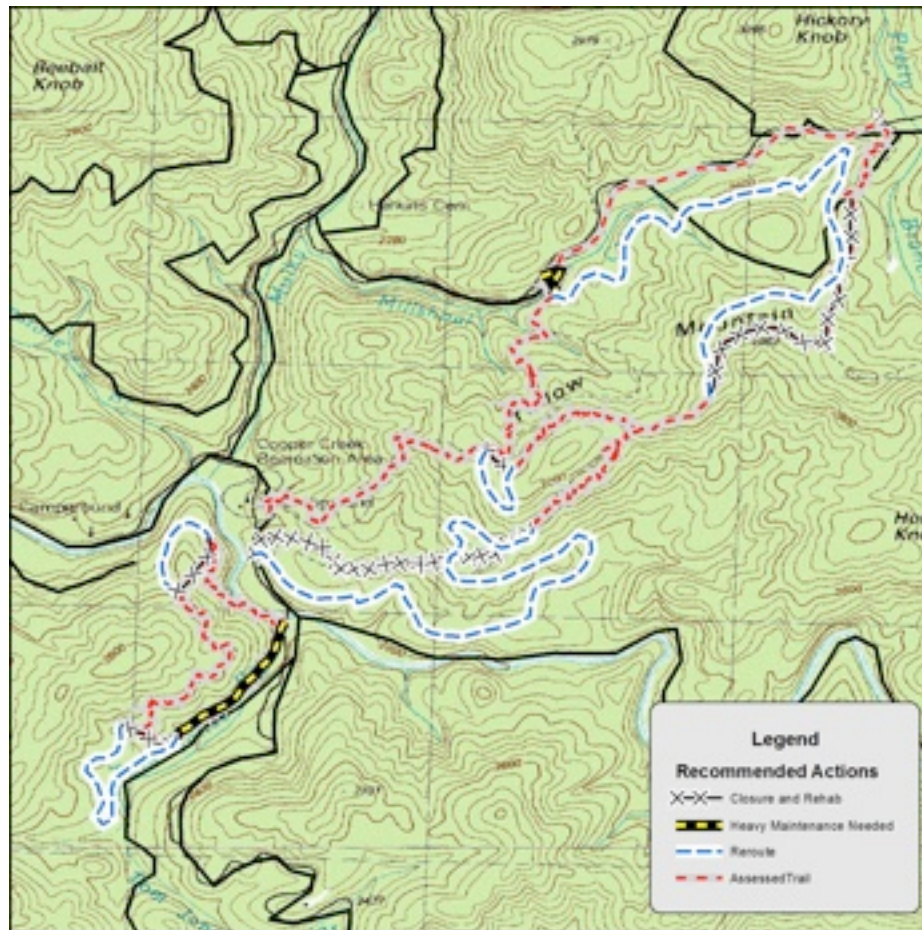
## Travel Management Strategies:

Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	24 (from TMO) 18-36	18-36	Mostly 18-24" benchcut trail
Structure Width (")	18 min.	18 min.	
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<3/10	
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO) 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	

# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Major trail leading out of Cooper Creek Recreation Area that extends to FDT 193 and 87 for extended loop opportunity. Generally well-designed and constructed. Narrow switchback/wet crossing location could be improved for sustainability.
Social Setting	Hike-only trail out of Cooper Creek Recreation Area
Managerial Setting	
Priorities	Medium- Improve wet crossing location with rock armor and increased width. Medium- Consider relocation of 89/86/196 to create improved trail connections to Recreation Area and without use of forest road.



## Representative Photographs:



*Top Left: Directional signage and map near provide ideal navigation*

*Top Right and Bottom Right: Unimproved stream crossings need hardening to minimize sedimentation*

*Bottom Left: Carsonite post and unimproved trail tread*



# TRAIL: ROCKY MOUNTAIN

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Rocky Mountain Trail
<b>Trail Number</b>	114
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	1.83
<b>Beg. Location</b>	FDR-283
<b>End Location</b>	Appalachian Trail
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



## Travel Management Strategies:

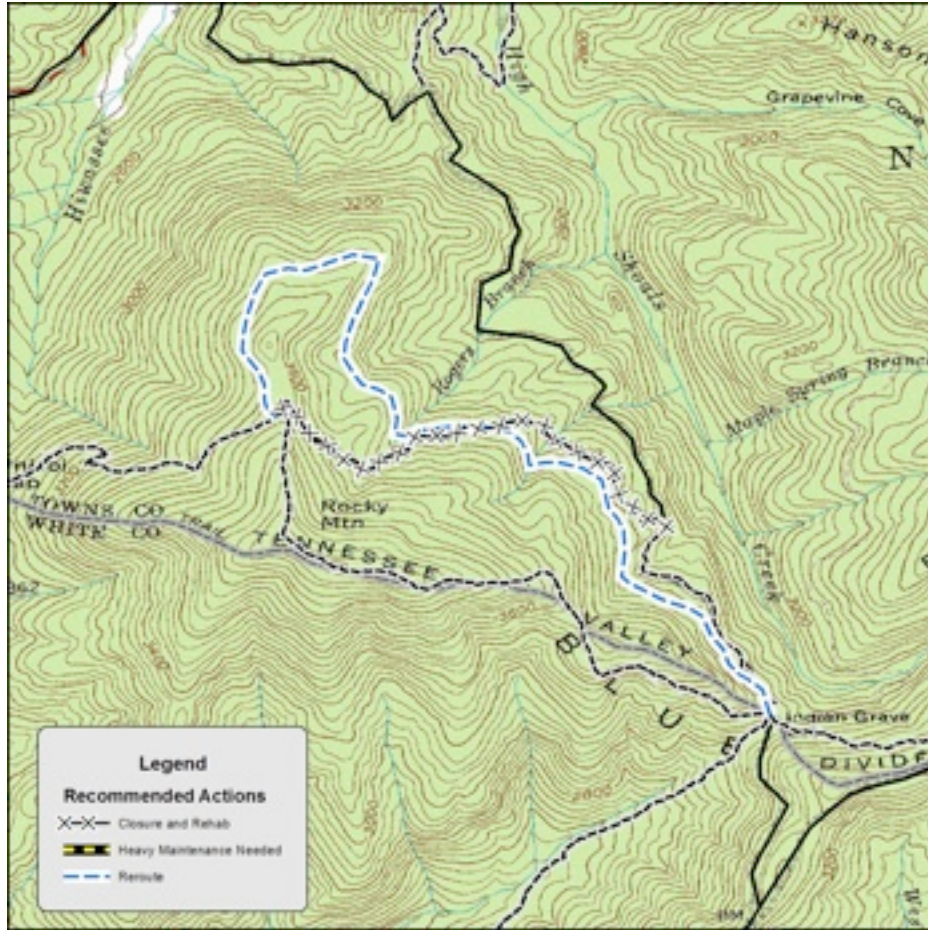
Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	24 (from TMO) 18-36	18-36	Beginning 67% of trail on old road bed, 96+" wide, remainder 18-24"
Structure Width (")	18 min.	18 min.	
Tread Surface	Native w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<6/14	Many >12" obstacles and protrusions
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	More than 1/2 of trail beyond old road bed is greater than 20%
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO) 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	
Turn Radius (')	3-6	2-3	



## Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Located on FDR from Indian Gap for approximately .67 miles, followed by old road bed location with failing water management for approximately .25 miles, then .67 miles of steep sidehill location (avg. grade >20%) with no water management to AT.
Social Setting	A blue-blazed side-trail to the AT to provide a loop opportunity from Indian Gap. Relatively and unnecessarily rough tread may discourage type of use that would be anticipated for a short loop hike to experience a small portion of the AT.
Managerial Setting	No functioning water management on old road bed portion of route. Trail is in need of general maintenance, tread improvement, and significant relocation to meet Class 3 parameters.
Priorities	Medium- Add functioning water management to improve sustainability or relocate trail from old road bed to AT.



## Representative Photographs:



*Top Left: Rocky Mountain trail provides a loop opportunity when joined with the AT.*

*Top Right: A portion of the trail is located on an old road bed which has failed water management*

*Bottom Left and Right: Steep grades on the "singletrack" section lack water management.*





# TRAIL: SHOPE GAP

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Shope Gap Trail
<b>Trail Number</b>	193
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	0.62
<b>Beg. Location</b>	FDR-39 at Shope Gap
<b>End Location</b>	Yellow Mtn. Trail
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



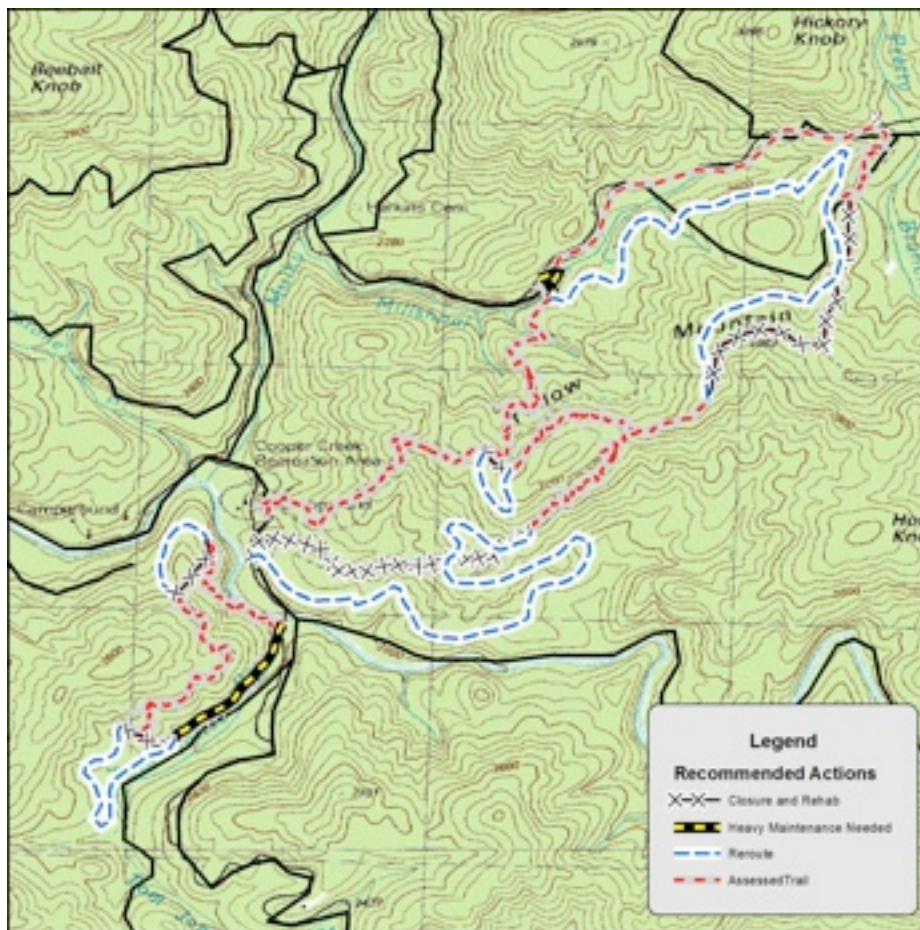
## Travel Management Strategies:

Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	24 (from TMO) 18-36	18-36	Currently ~18" on contour section and 84" on section located on road
Structure Width (")	18 min.	18 min.	
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<3/10	
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20		Road section 3-15%, singletrack on fall line for approx. 60% of length
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15		
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO) 7-8/3-5		
Turn Radius (')	3-6		

# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Trail connected to FDR 39 and located on road bed for approximately .25 miles. Trail leaves road on fall line on side ridge to connect with FDT 87.
Social Setting	Hiking-only trail that connects FDTs 89 and 87 for a longer loop out of Cooper Creek Recreation Area. Experience could be improved by removing trail from road.
Managerial Setting	No water management on singletrack portion of trail.
Priorities	Medium- Initiate water management on singletrack portion of trail. Medium- Relocate co-located portion of trail for a more consistent and enjoyable recreation experience.



## Representative Photographs:



*Above Left: Direction sign and map provide ideal navigation. Regulatory signage on wooden post rather than additional carsonite would improve the aesthetic*



*Above Right: Typical corridor condition and relatively young forest*



*Above Left: Vandalized signage at intersection with Cooper Creek and Yellow Mountain Trails*

*Above Right: Minimally constructed trail, but sidehill location and relatively low trail gradient results in little maintenance need*

*Left: Sections of fall-line transport water and lead to erosion.*



# TRAIL: STANLEY GAP

Ranger District	Blue Ridge
System Name	Aska Trail System
Trail Number	165B
Miles Assessed	4.8
Beg. Location	Stanley Creek Rd. TH
End Location	Deep Gap TH
Trail Class	3- Developed/Improved
Designed Use	Bike



## Travel Management Strategies:

Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	Y	N	N	Intersections with hiking-only portions of the Benton Mackaye Trail and unmapped trails near Deep Gap TH make use separation confusing

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width	24" (from TMO) 18-36"	24"	Recent maintenance activities have not narrowed tread width toward DP value
Structure Width	36" min.	36"	No structures present
Tread Surface	Native, some rough	Native, some rough	Very little soft tread present, except at drainage crossings near Deep Gap TH
Protrusions/Obstacles	<3", 10"	<6"/12"	Increase due to existing conditions and desired backcountry style experience
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-10/15/10-20	5-12/25/10-30	Increase due to existing conditions and desired backcountry style experience
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	3-8/8	3-8/8	Little cross slope on trail, but steep bench cut on steep topography limits water on trail
Clearing Height/Width/Shoulder	10'4" (from TMO)	8'4"	
Turn Radius	4-8'	3-6'	No turns at present, but decrease if necessary with relocations of steep pitches



# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Trail has a suitably sustainable design and is stable without significant maintenance for most of its length. Steep, wide routes at beginning and end of trail provide some maintenance challenges. Surrounding area has developed and trail is currently very close to sights and sounds of human activity, but still retains a backcountry feel.
Social Setting	The Deep Gap TH has significant use, while the Stanley Creek Road TH does not. Use levels/density by hikers and mountain bikers seem similar. Steep grades, especially near THs increase the likelihood of negative trail user interactions. Narrow tread away from THs do not show signs of width allowance/yielding issues.
Managerial Setting	Little maintenance has been conducted or is necessary, except on wide routes near THs. TH kiosk info is mostly absent at Stanley Gap and somewhat lacking at Deep Gap. Creating a loop opportunity with this trail would significantly improve the trail system and reduce mountain biker need to ride on Aska Rd with high speed traffic.
Priorities	<p>Medium- Improve TH kiosk signage (volunteer outreach, trail conditions) and navigation signage at Flat Creek intersection (3-way with only 2 directional of arrows)</p> <p>Medium- Consider Stanley Gap Loop around Bellcamp Ridge and connecting with the southern leg of Flat Creek Loop to better disperse use and reduce need for mountain bike use on Aska Road.</p>



## Representative Photographs:



*Above Left and Right: Relatively steep rolling contour trail near ridgeline. While old road-based portions of the trail near the Trailheads have required significant maintenance, these portions sustain the same use without degrading*



*Left and Above Left and Right: Short portions of the trail located on the fall line are eroding and widening. Relocations of these sections would reduce mountain bike speeds and arrest the erosion before much more significant maintenance is necessary.*



# TRAIL: YELLOW MOUNTAIN

<b>Ranger District</b>	Blue Ridge
<b>System Name</b>	Yellow Mountain Trail
<b>Trail Number</b>	86
<b>Miles Assessed</b>	2.13
<b>Beg. Location</b>	
<b>End Location</b>	FDT 89 (Mill Shoals Trail)
<b>Trail Class</b>	3- Developed/Improved
<b>Designed Use</b>	Hike



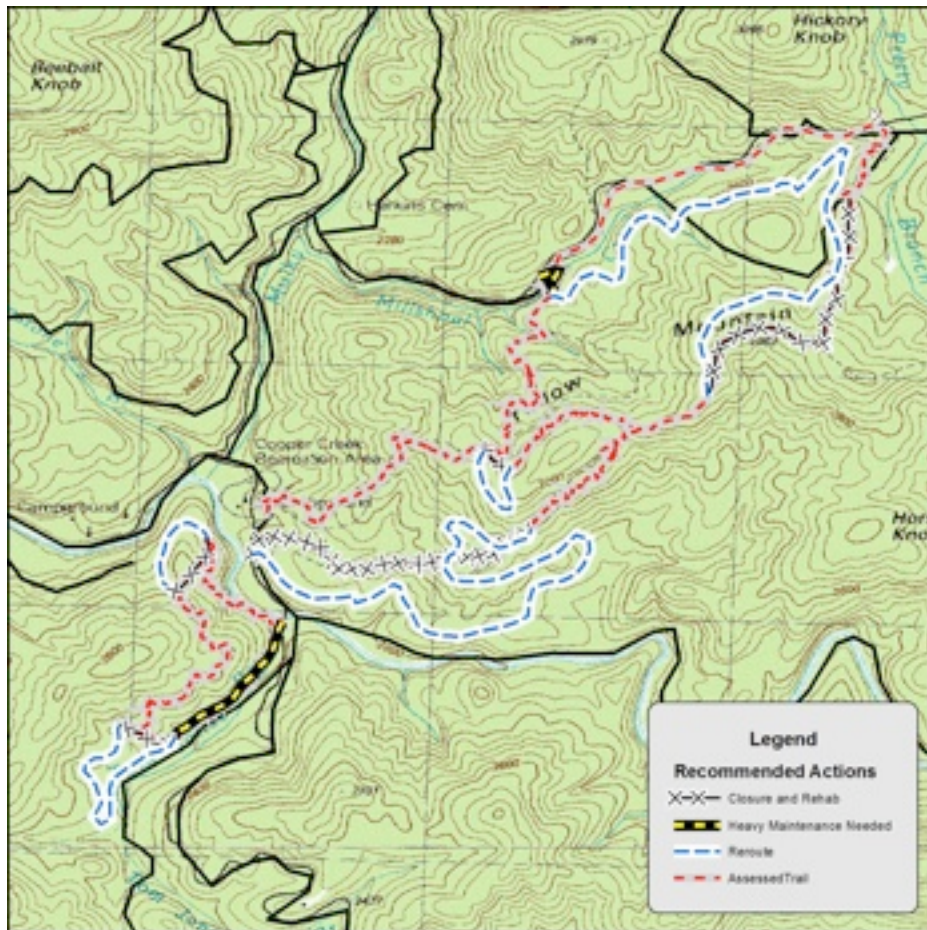
## Travel Management Strategies:

Strategy	Hike	Bike	Horse	OHV	Comments
Managed Use	Y	N	N	N	

## Design Parameter Recommendations:

Design Parameter	USFS DP Value	Rec DP Value	Exceptions/Comments
Tread Width (")	24 (from TMO) 18-36	18-36	
Structure Width (")	18 min.	18 min.	
Tread Surface	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	Native, w/borrow for stabilization	
Protrusions/Obstacles (")	<3/10	<3/10	
Target Grade/Max/Density (%)	3-12/25/10-20	3-12/25/10-20	
Target Cross Slope/Max (%)	5-10/15	5-10/15	
Clearing Height/Width (')	10/4 (from TMO) 7-8/3-5	7-8/3-5	
Turn Radius (')	3-6	3-6	

# Recommendations



Setting	Comments
Physical Setting	Trail begins near Cooper Creek Recreation Area, routed up a low-gradient drainage with multiple wet crossings, then climbing on sidehill around higher knob and connecting to Mill Shoals Trail. A number of short stretches of trail constructed at greater than 20% grades and on fall lines.
Social Setting	Hiking-only trail. Would better serve as a component of a trail system with improved connections to FDTs 89 and 196 at campground
Managerial Setting	Some very nice sections of nearly maintenance-free bench cut trail, but also sections of fall line and informal wet area crossings that need to be relocated and fortified, respectively.
Priorities	<p>Medium- Improve wet area crossings by armoring route and providing drainage improvements</p> <p>Medium- Relocate small fall line sections of trail comprising approximately 20% of total trail mileage.</p>

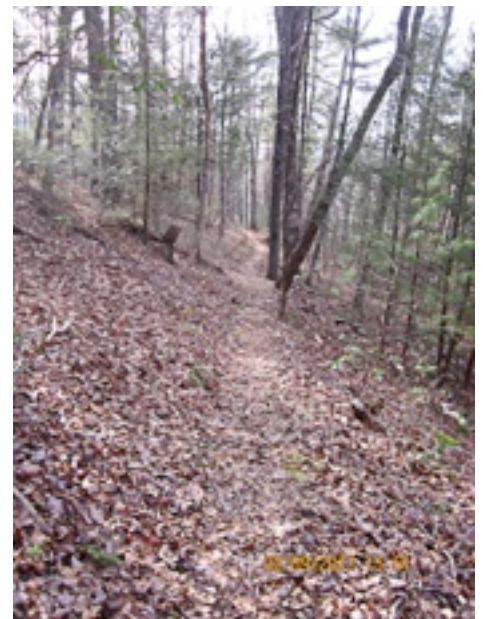


## Representative Photographs:



*Above Left: Excellent navigation signage, but trail intersection location requires immediate fall line ascent that has begun to erode*

*Above Right: Bridge across stream with some vandalism of hiking sign*



*Above Left and Right: Good examples of near maintenance-free, rolling contour trail*

## **Blue Ridge Ranger District Survey Results**



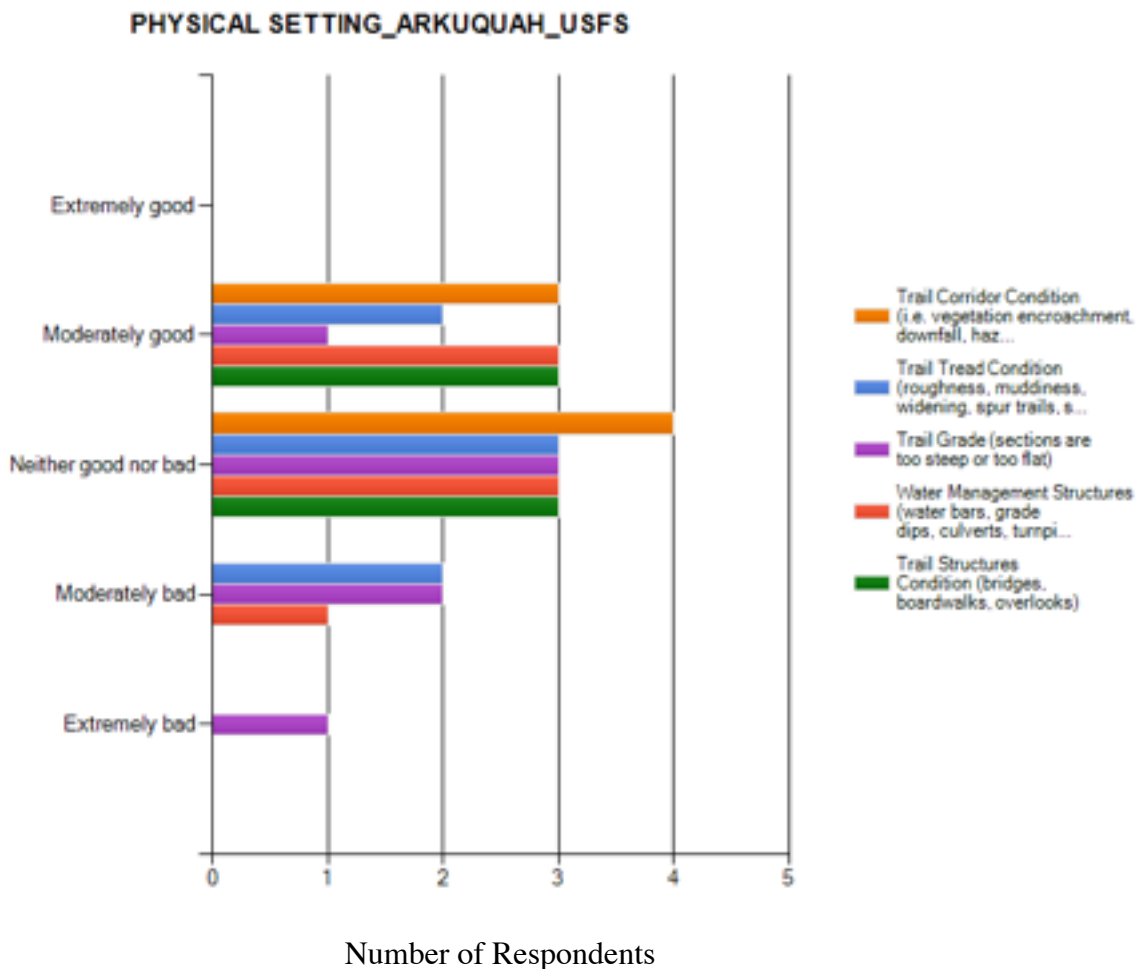
# TRAIL: ARKAQUAH

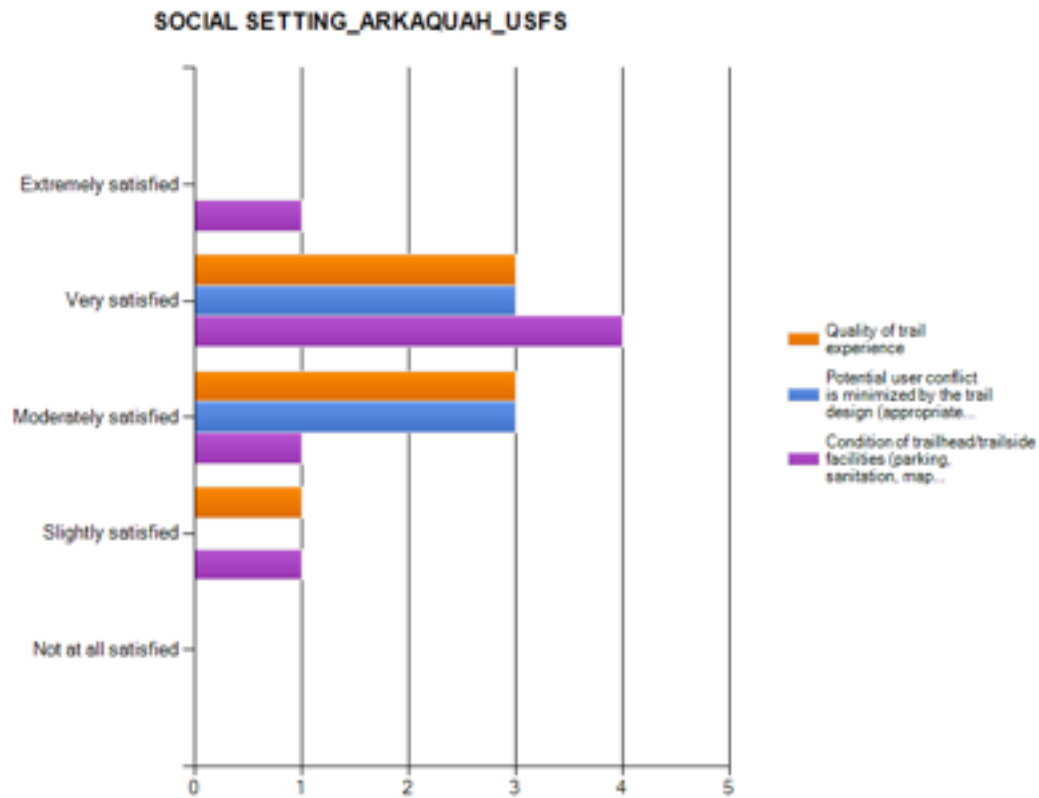
## Survey Results: Forest Service

**History:** The trail in its present location was established in the mid 1970's as part of a larger YCC project on the Ranger District, and later designated as a National Recreation Trail.

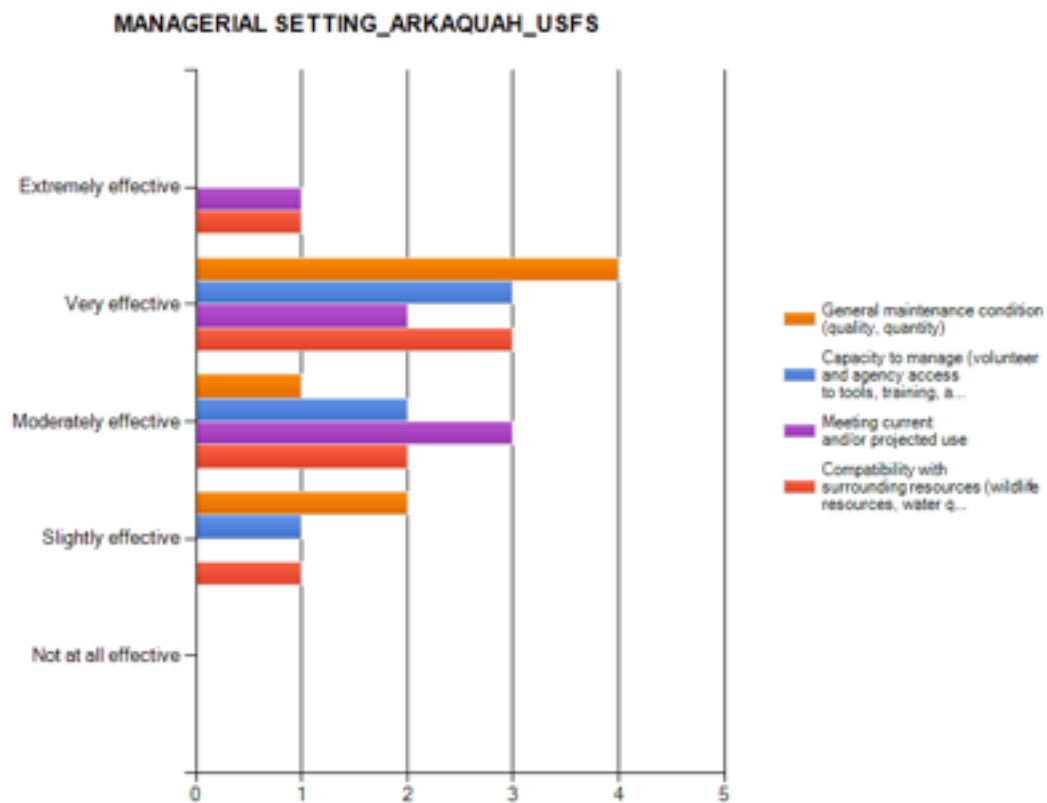
**Maintenance Providers:** The Mountain High Hikers perform periodic maintenance on the trail, but not on a set schedule. Blue Ridge District personnel perform some occasional work.

**Reasons Included In Assessment:** This is a popular and scenic ridgeline trail through the Brasstown Wilderness. The western-most one and one half mile of the trail drops steeply down to Trackrock Gap, with multiple switchbacks and sections of fall or near-fall line straight runs. Better routing of some of the route as it drops toward Trackrock Gap would enhance visitor enjoyment and reduce resource impacts.





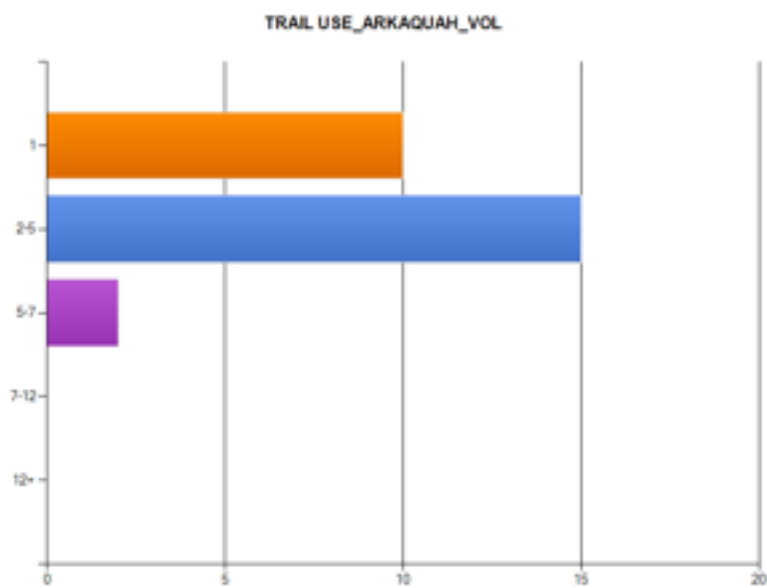
Number of Respondents



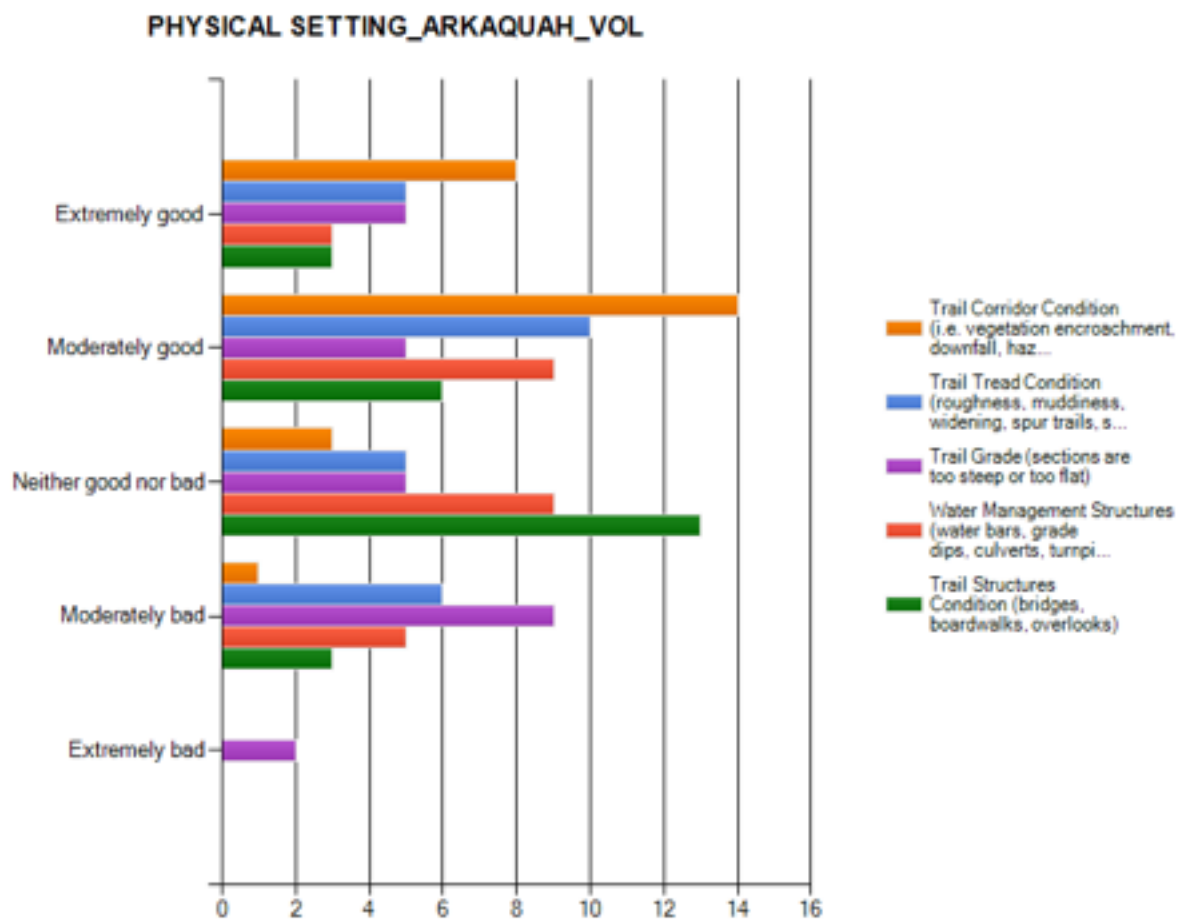
Number of Respondents



# Survey Results: Volunteers

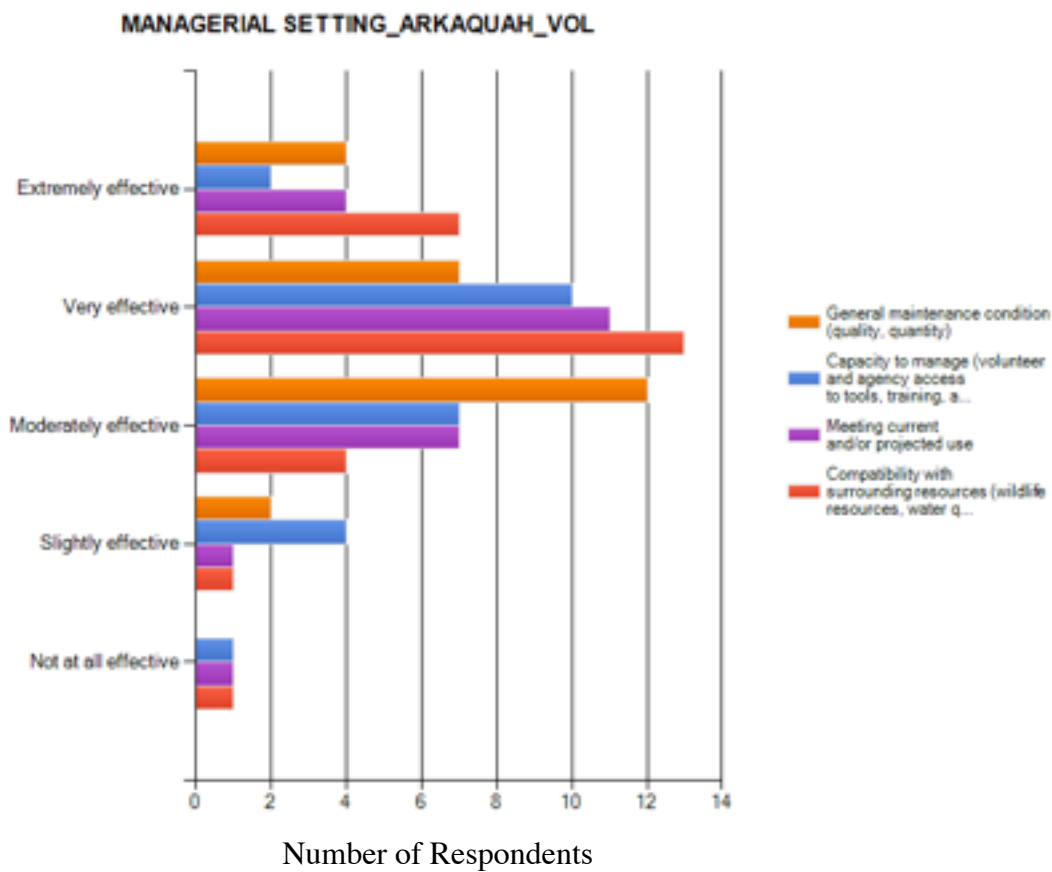
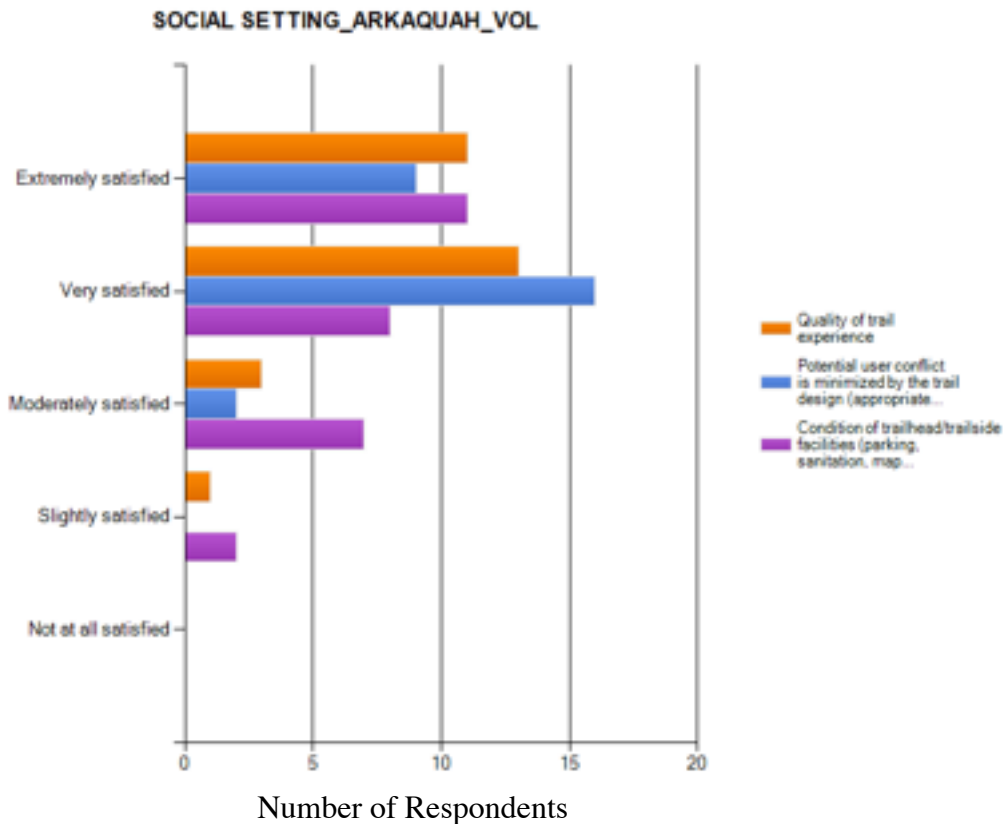


Number of Respondents



Number of Respondents

# Survey Results: Volunteers





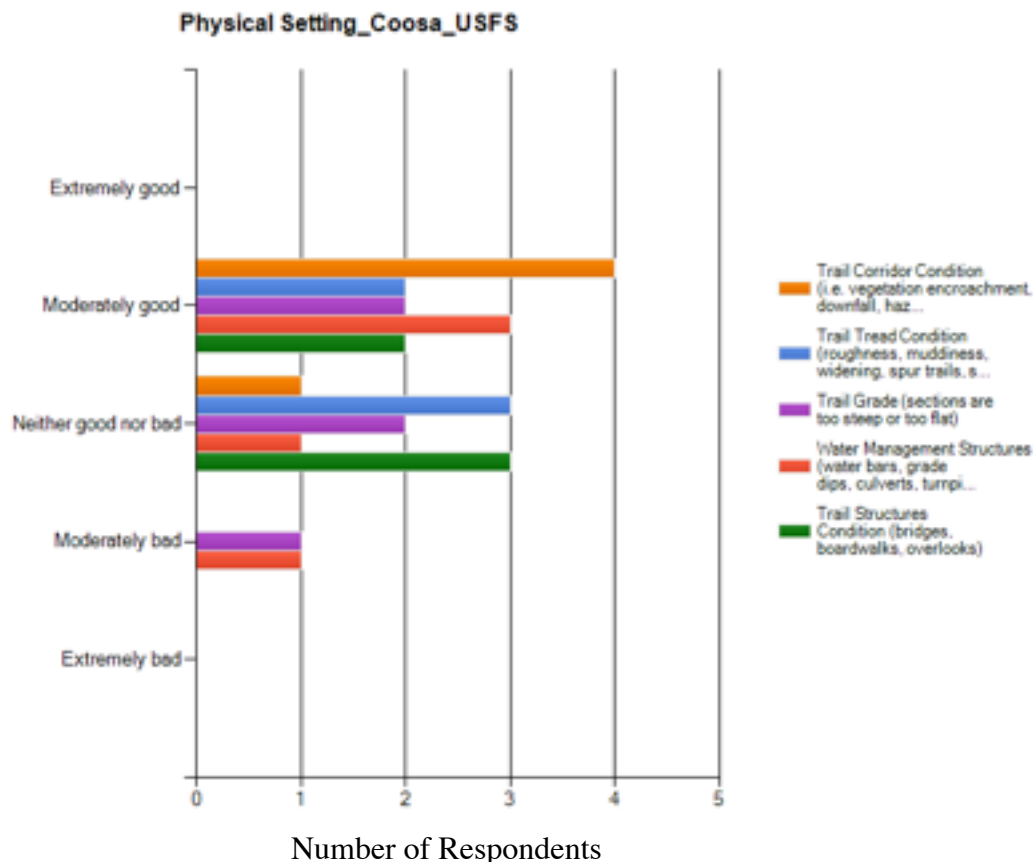
# TRAIL: COOSA BACKCOUNTRY

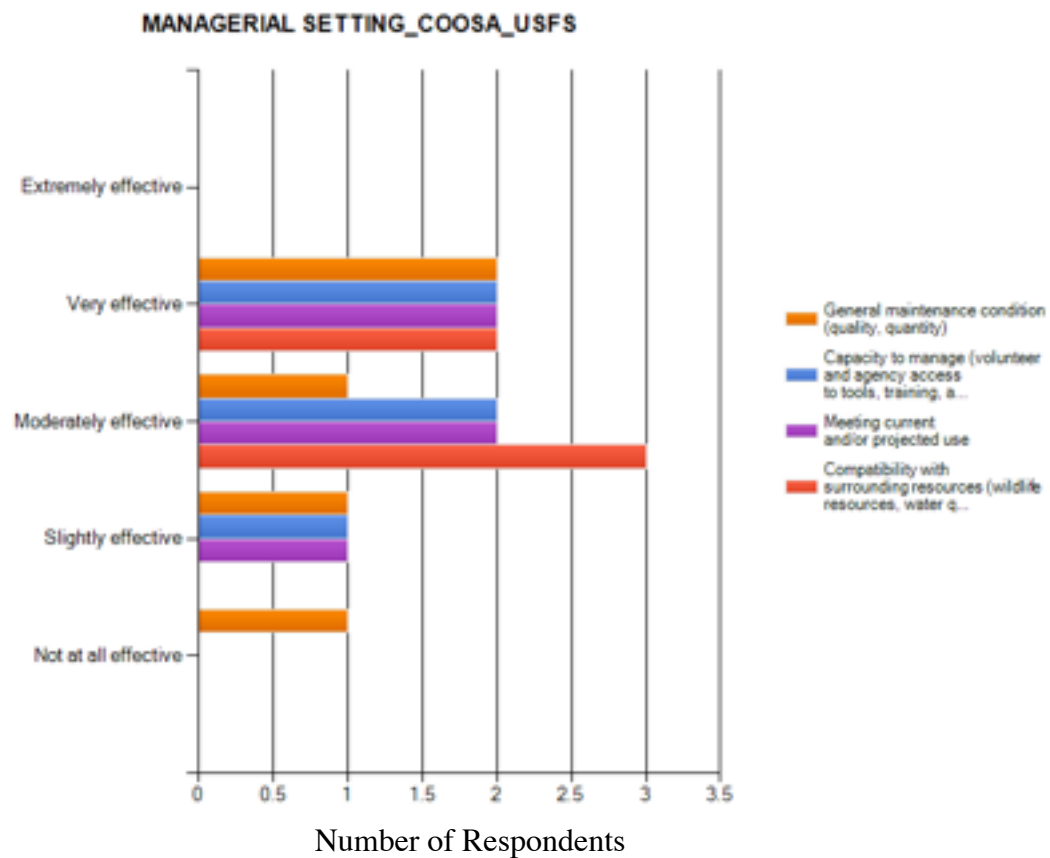
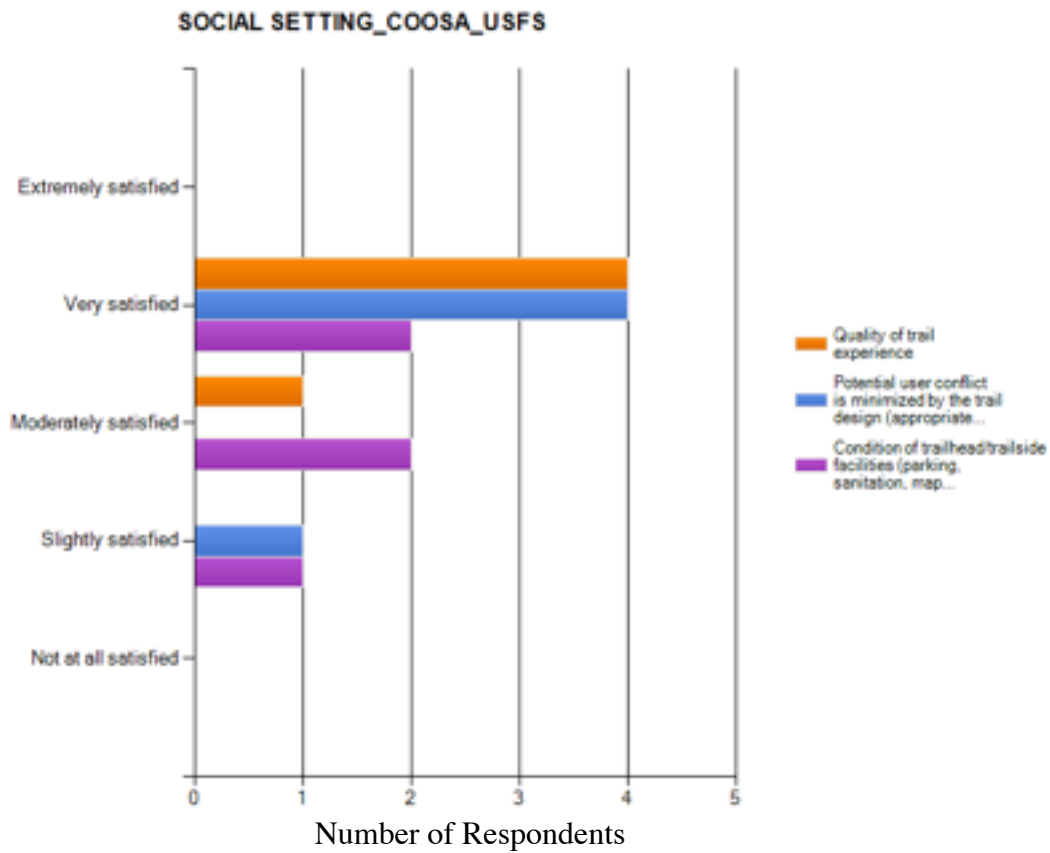
## Survey Results: Forest Service

**History:** In 1980, it was established under a cooperative agreement between the Forest Service and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to provide a loop hiking opportunity for visitors to Vogel State Park. The route was laid in by State Park personnel, and a State Park trail crew the trail. From Coosa Bald to just north of Slaughter Gap, the trail is co-located with the Duncan Ridge Trail.

**Maintenance Providers:** The Forest Service stipulated in the agreement between the two agencies that the maintenance of the trail would be the responsibility of the Park. Maintenance has been performed sporadically by Park personnel, park volunteers, the Mountain High Hikers, and the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club. However, no maintenance has been performed on a set schedule. Joint efforts between the park and Ranger District led to two separate maintenance contracts being utilized within the last decade to perform heavy maintenance and reroutes along several of the most problematic sections of the trail.

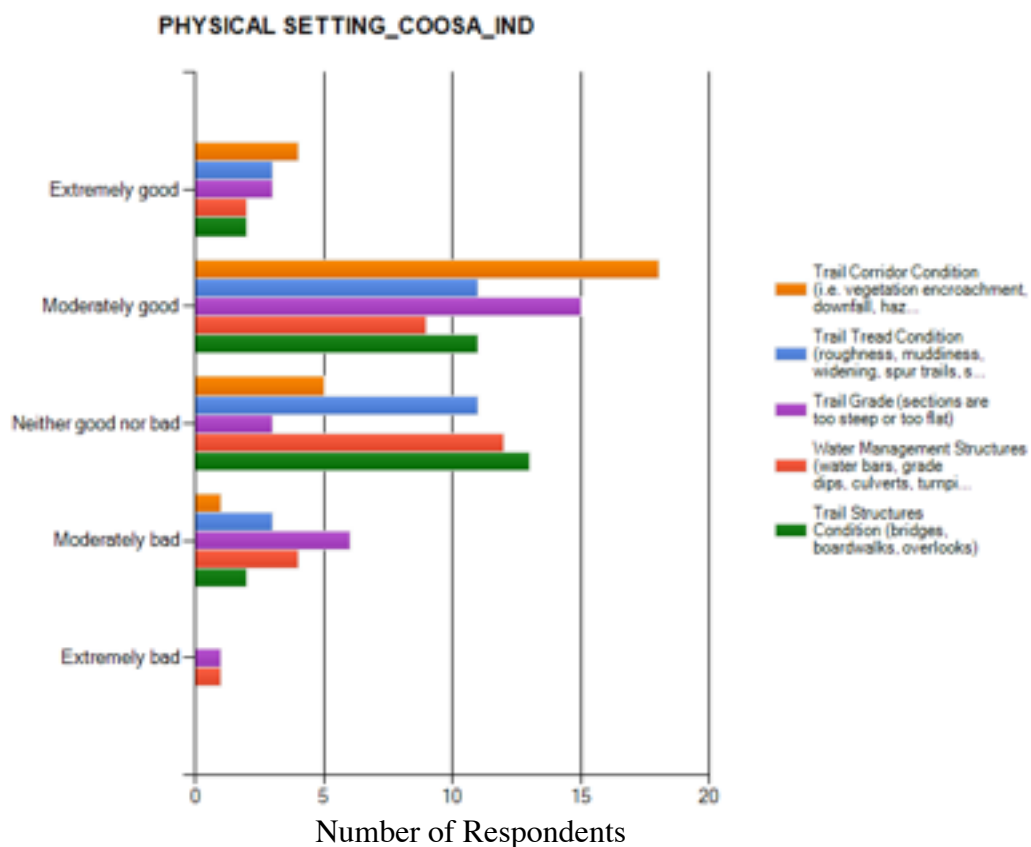
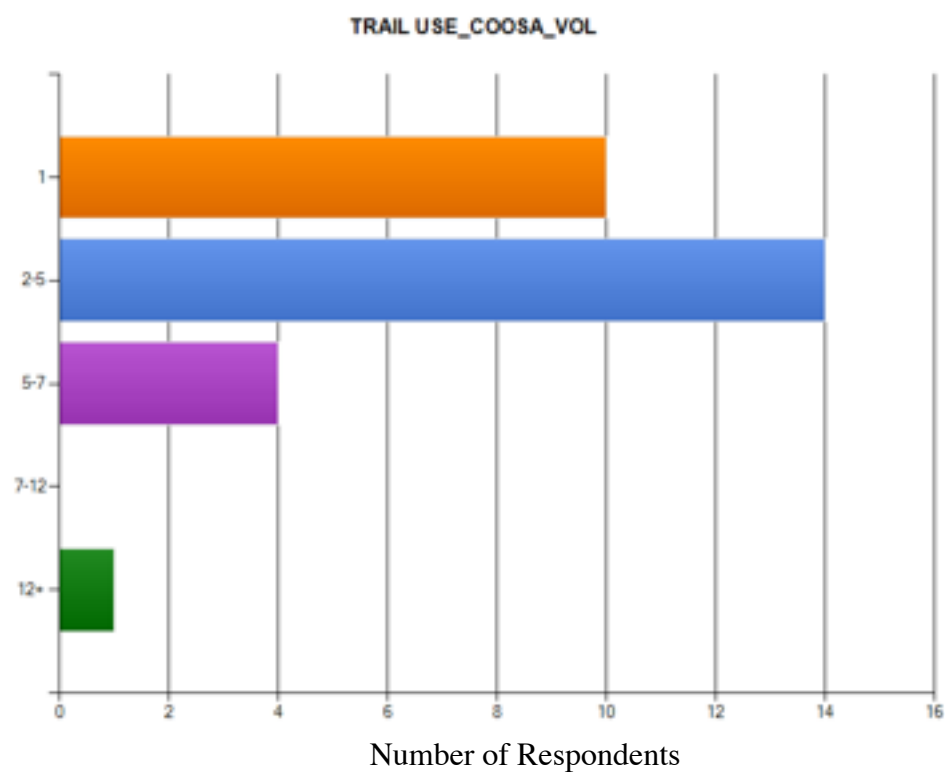
**Reasons Included In Assessment:** The trail was laid out poorly when it was established. Several sections of the trail still present maintenance challenges. This is a popular loop hike for both overnights and day-hikers. Additional rerouting and regular maintenance would provide a better user experience, as well as reducing resource impacts.



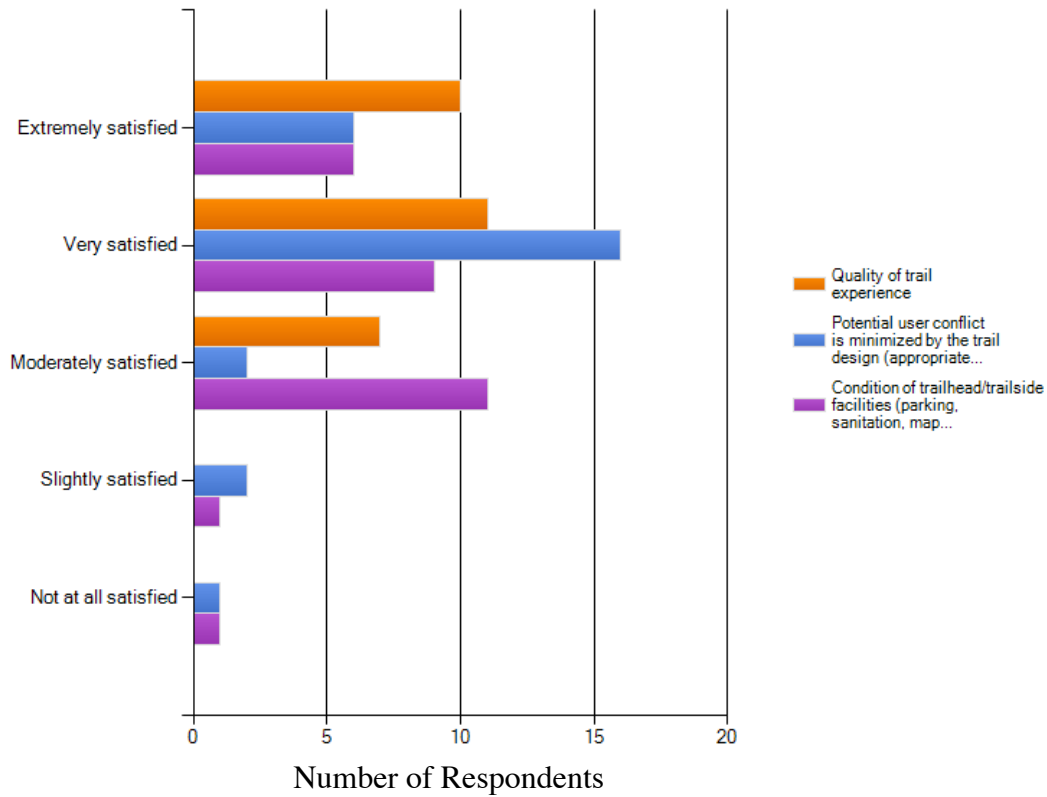




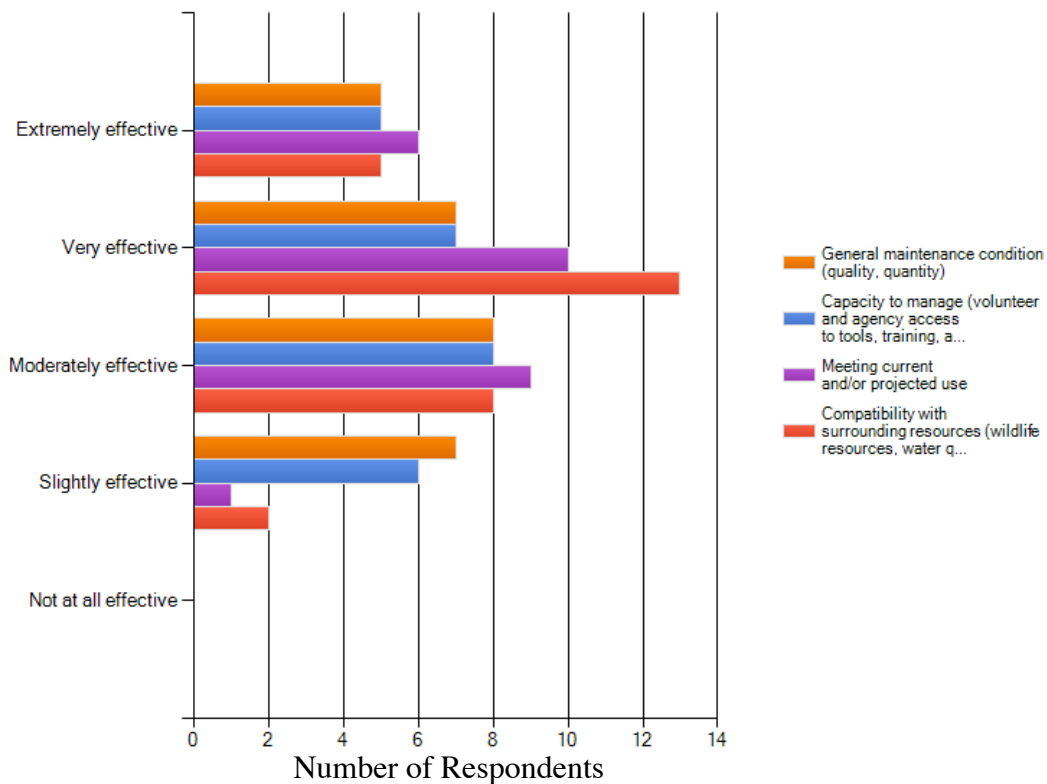
# Survey Results: Volunteers



### SOCIAL SETTING\_COOSA\_VOL



### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_COOSA\_VOL



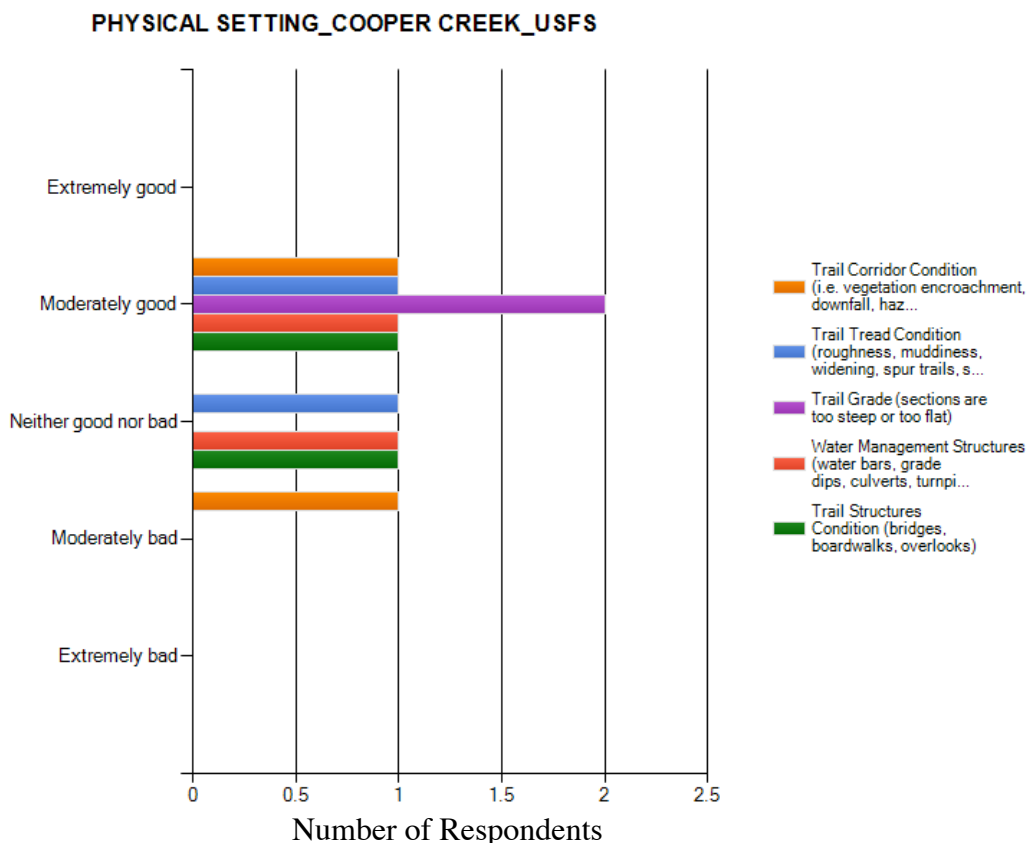
# TRAIL: COOPER CREEK

## Survey Results: Forest Service

**History:** This trail was established by the Ranger District in the late 1980's after a timber harvest in the area. Much of the route is located on old timber haul roads. The single track portion was built by Ranger District personnel and a local hiking club that was in existence at that time. The local club also paid for the marble marker at the trailhead which calls the trail the "Eyes On Wildlife". When the trail was established, the intent was to keep the area that had been harvested of timber in an early-successional state as a way of providing habitat for certain bird species. That intent was not followed up on, and the area is reverting back to a closed-canopy environment.

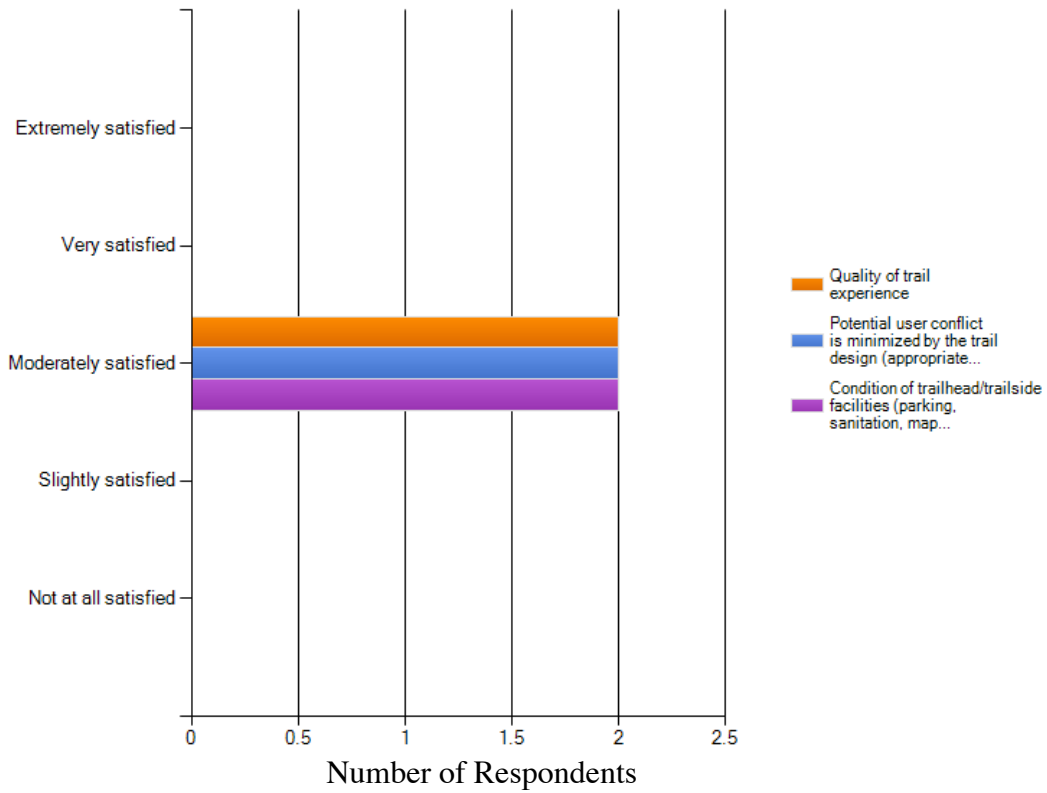
**Maintenance Providers:** The Mountain High Hikers do occasional maintenance, but not on a regularly scheduled basis. The Ranger District personnel perform occasional work.

**Reasons Included In Assessment:** This trail is in close proximity to the other trails of the Cooper Creek system. It is the only complete loop in the system, and could provide multi-use opportunities, with some route adjustments. Additionally, a determination of whether to meet the original intent of the trail as a songbird habitat should be made.

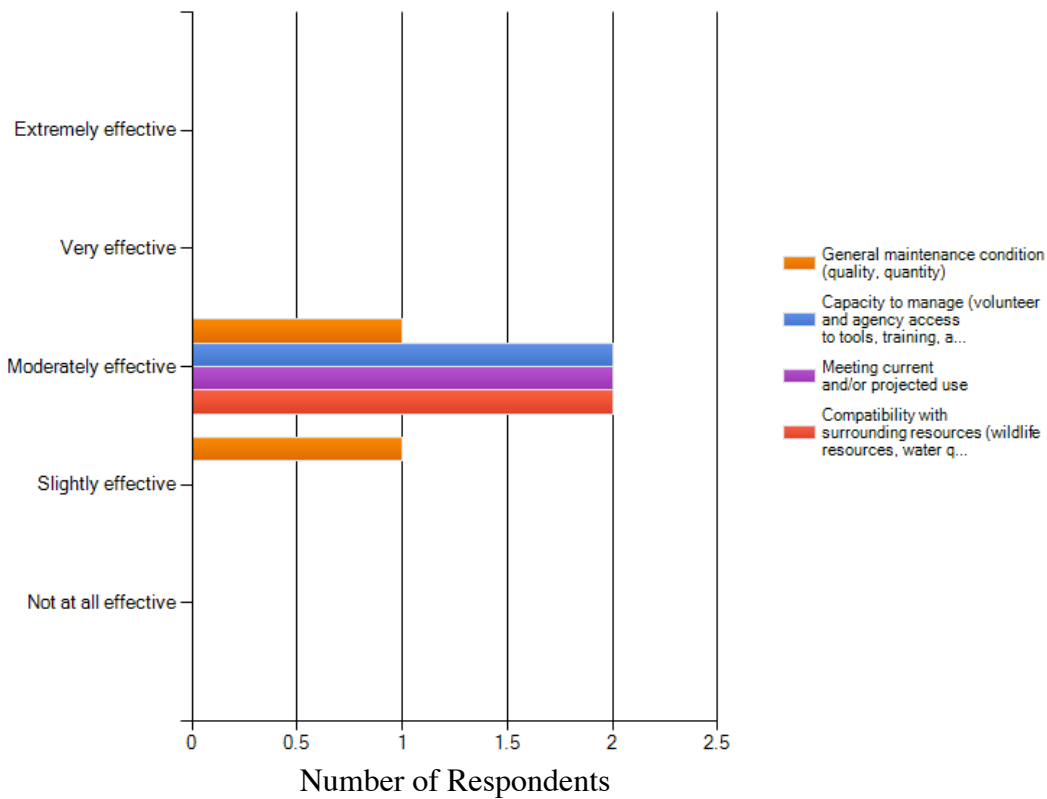




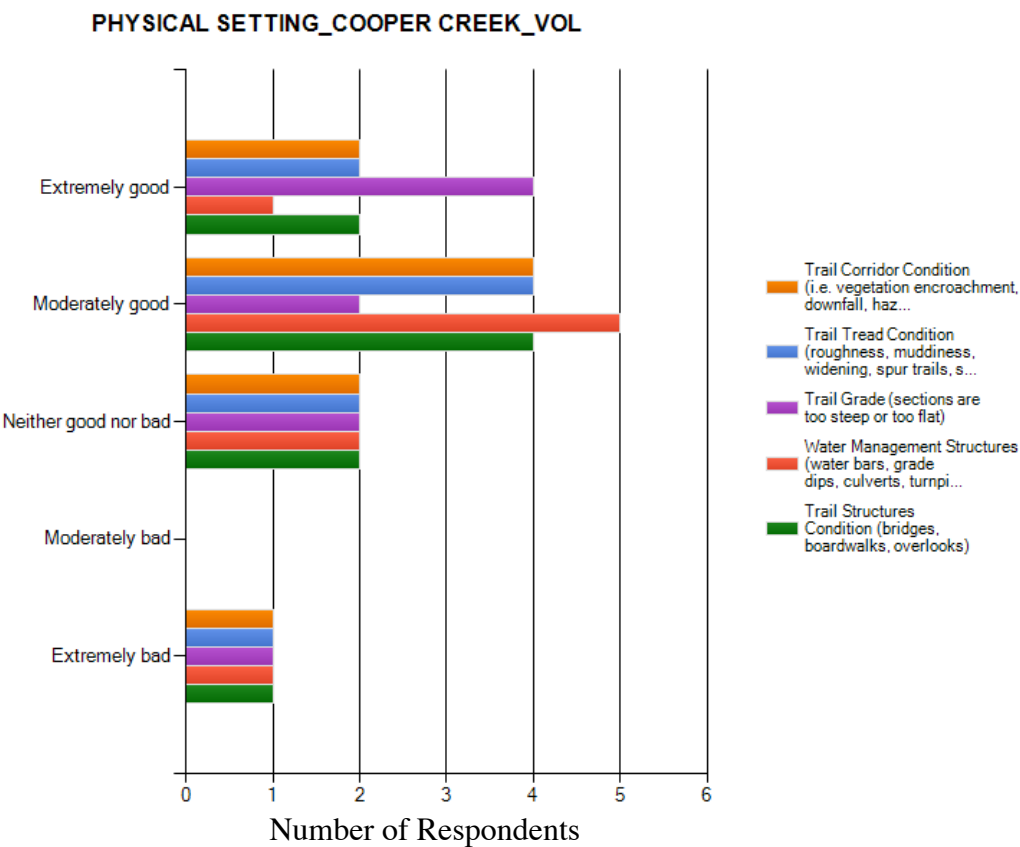
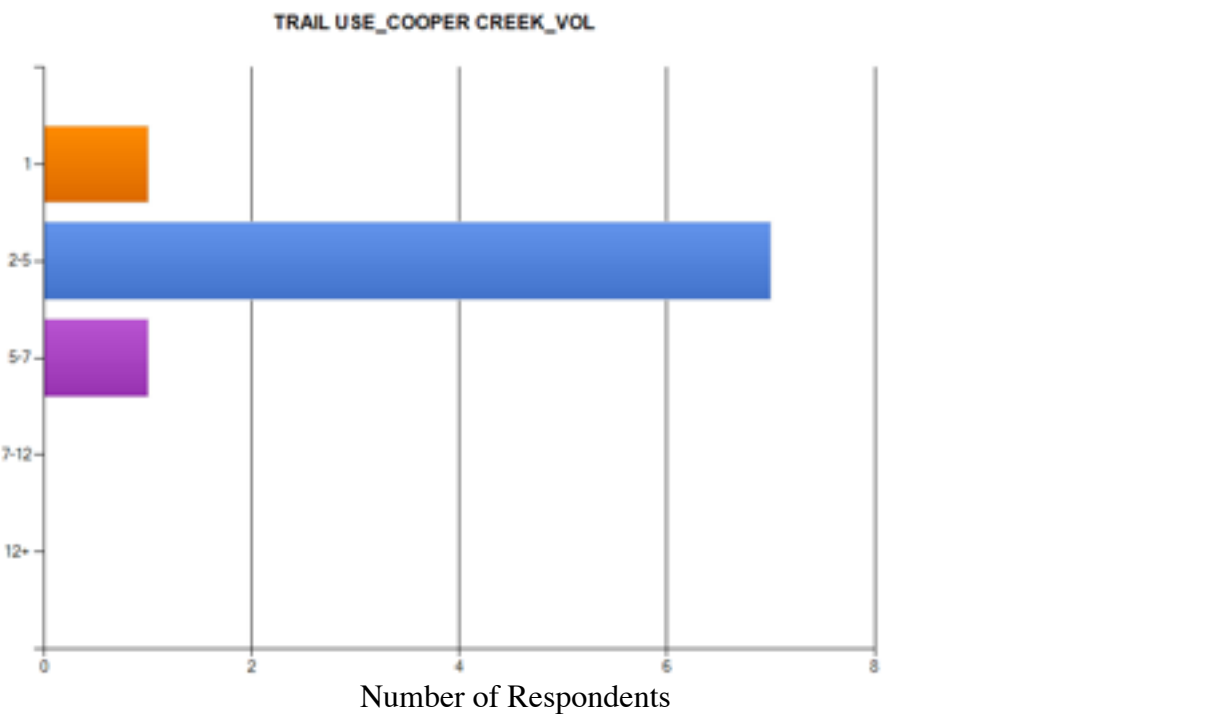
### SOCIAL SETTING\_COOPER CREEK\_USFS



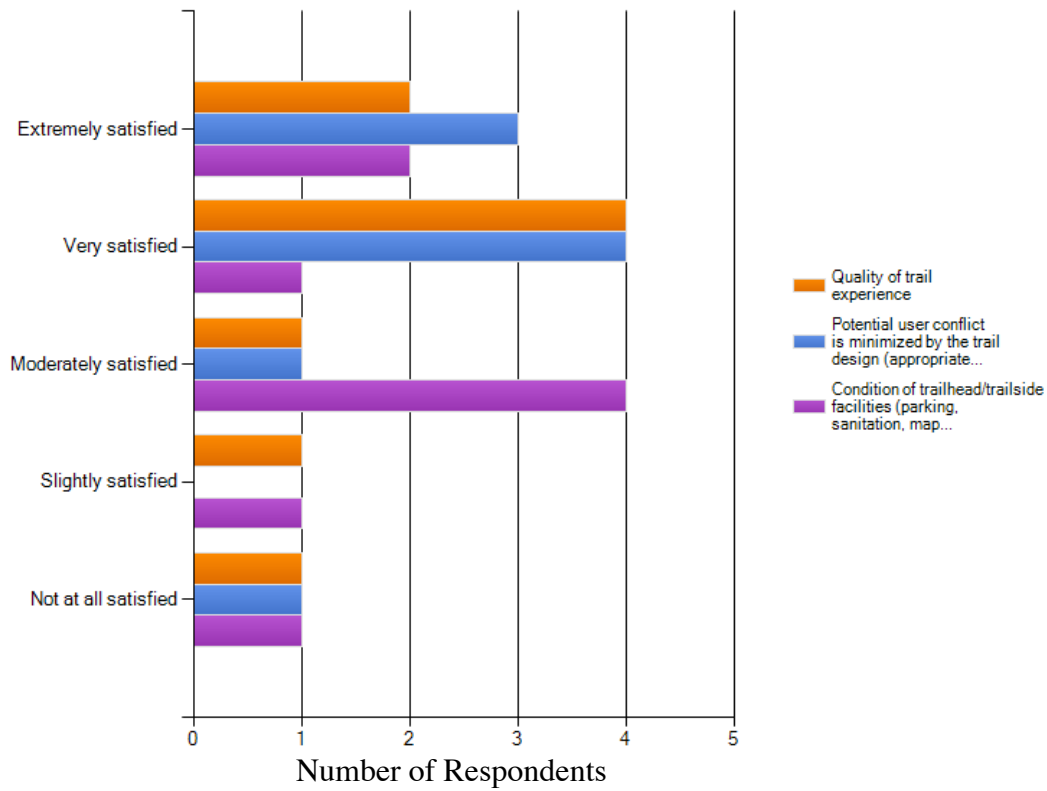
### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_COOPER CREEK\_USFS



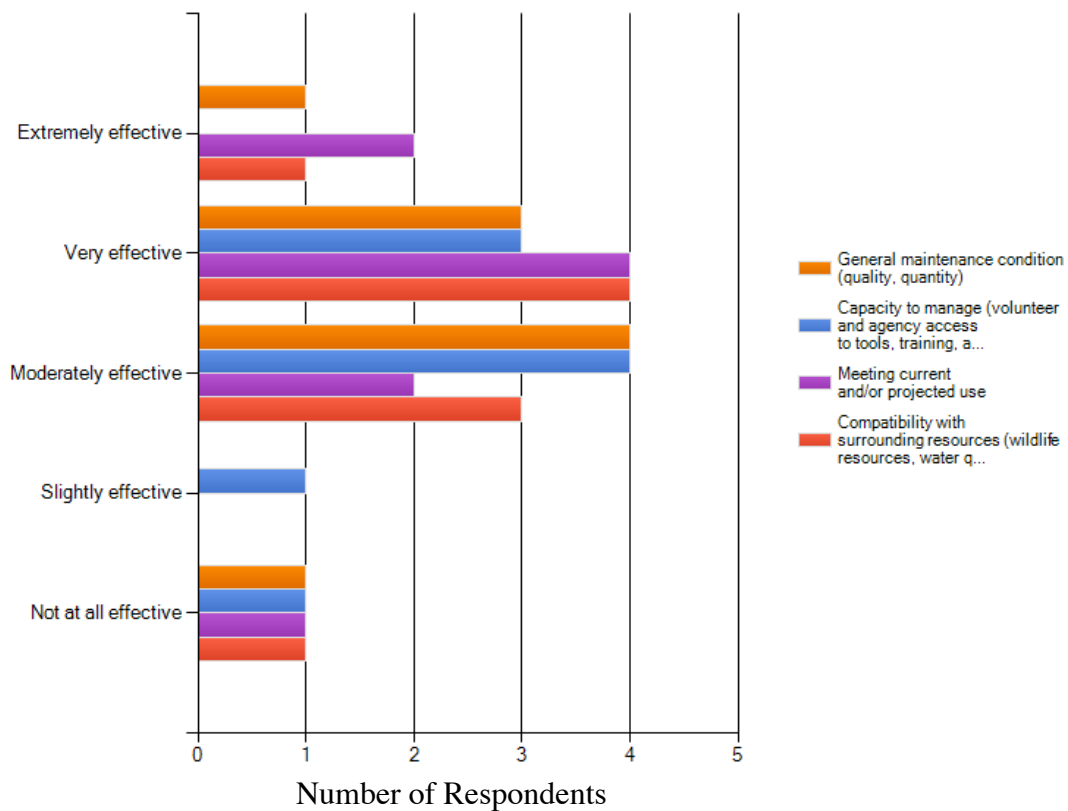
# Survey Results: Volunteers



### SOCIAL SETTING\_COOPER CREEK\_VOL



### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_COOPER CREEK\_VOL





## Volunteer Group Comments:

Mountain High Hikers:

Don't know the history, the trail is maintained by our club (MHH) for the last 2 years. Prior to our working on this trail, it had almost totally overgrown. We put in about 30 hours per year on the trail doing lopping, brushcutting, deadfall removal. The trail is well laid out and does not have much erosion issues. Signage and maps are OK. only light to moderate usage, more in the Spring, Summer and Fall. Area is NOT well known or publicized. no issues known.

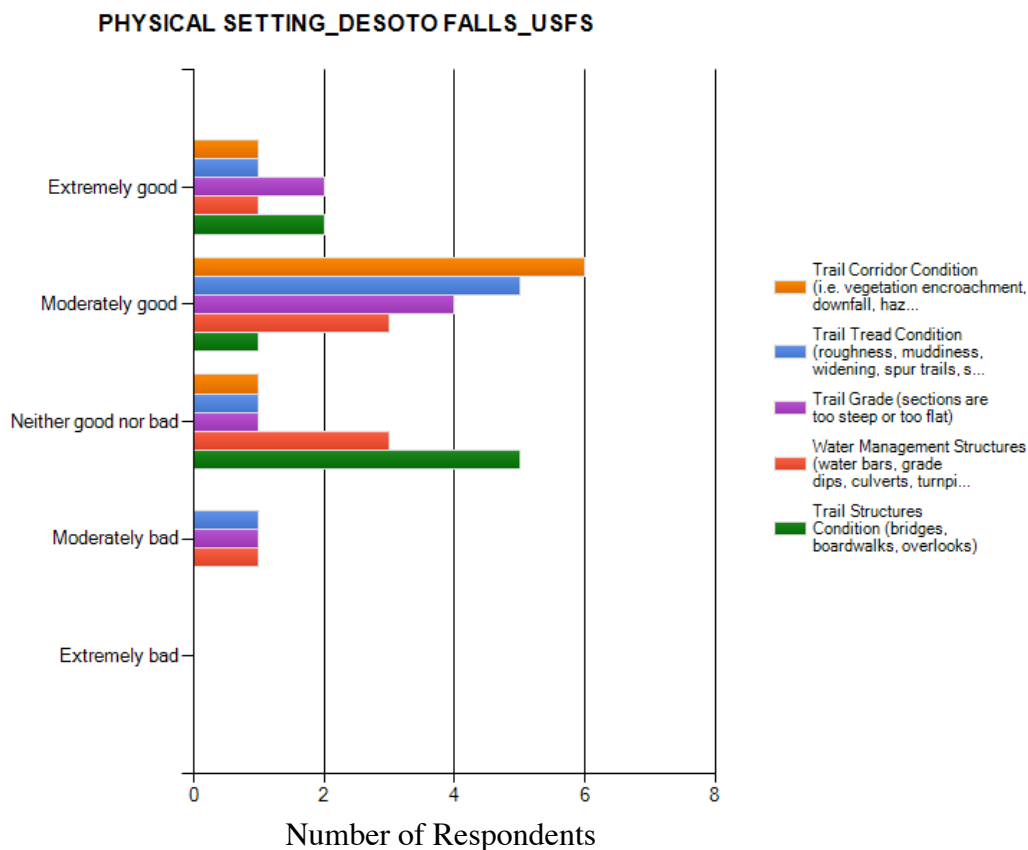
# TRAIL: DESOTO FALLS

## Survey Results: Forest Service

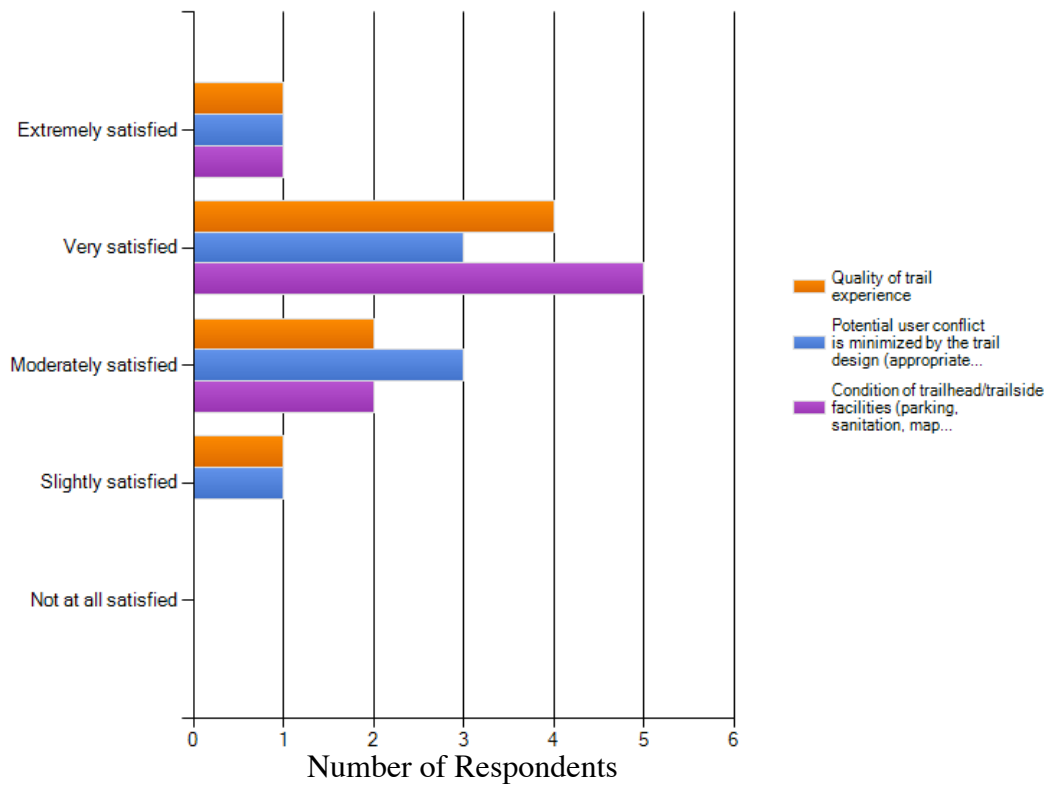
**History:** The trail was established in its present location in the 1970's, with bridges and viewing platforms being added as part of a large YCC project. Part of the route follows historic road locations. A northern section of the trail, which led to another set of falls, was abandoned and closed in the late 1999's because of poor route location and resource damage, as well as extensive clearing needed to maintain a vista of the falls this section accessed.

**Maintenance Providers:** The Mountain High Hikers perform periodic maintenance, but not on a set schedule. The Blue Ridge District personnel occasionally work the trail.

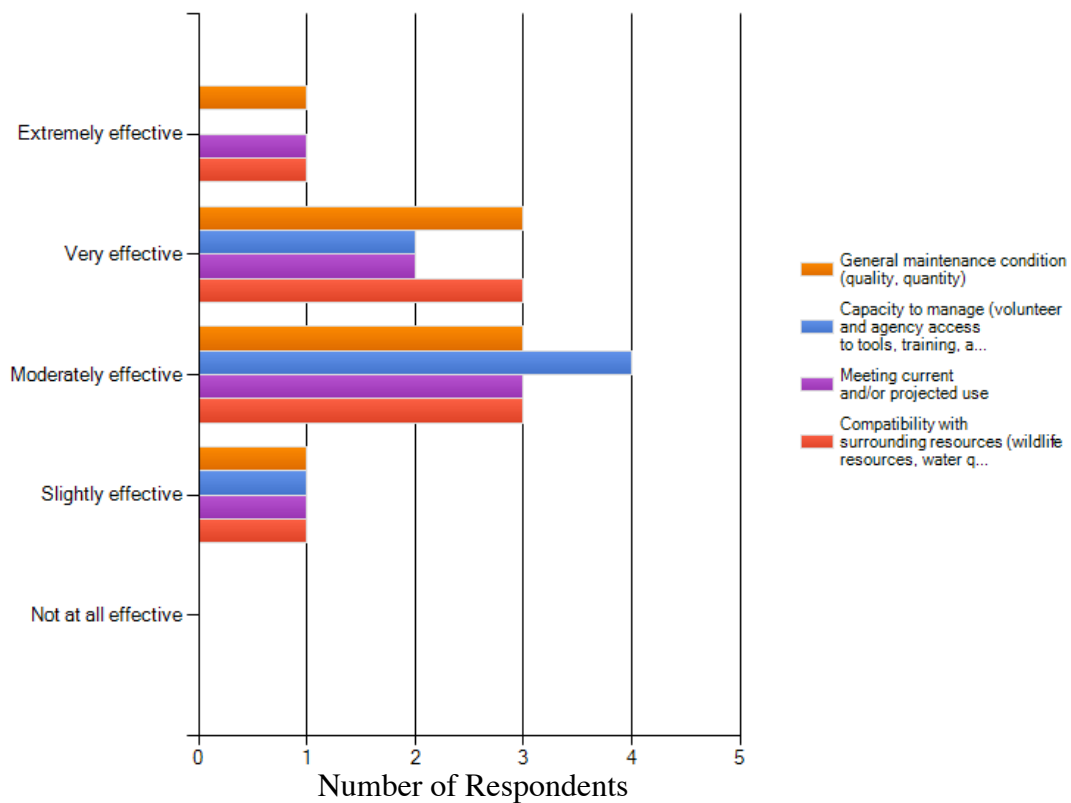
**Reasons Included In Assessment:** This is a very heavily used trail, as are all waterfall trails. Hardening and defining the trail tread and reworking existing steps and structures would enhance visitor enjoyment and reduce resource impacts.



### SOCIAL SETTING\_DESOTO FALLS\_USFS

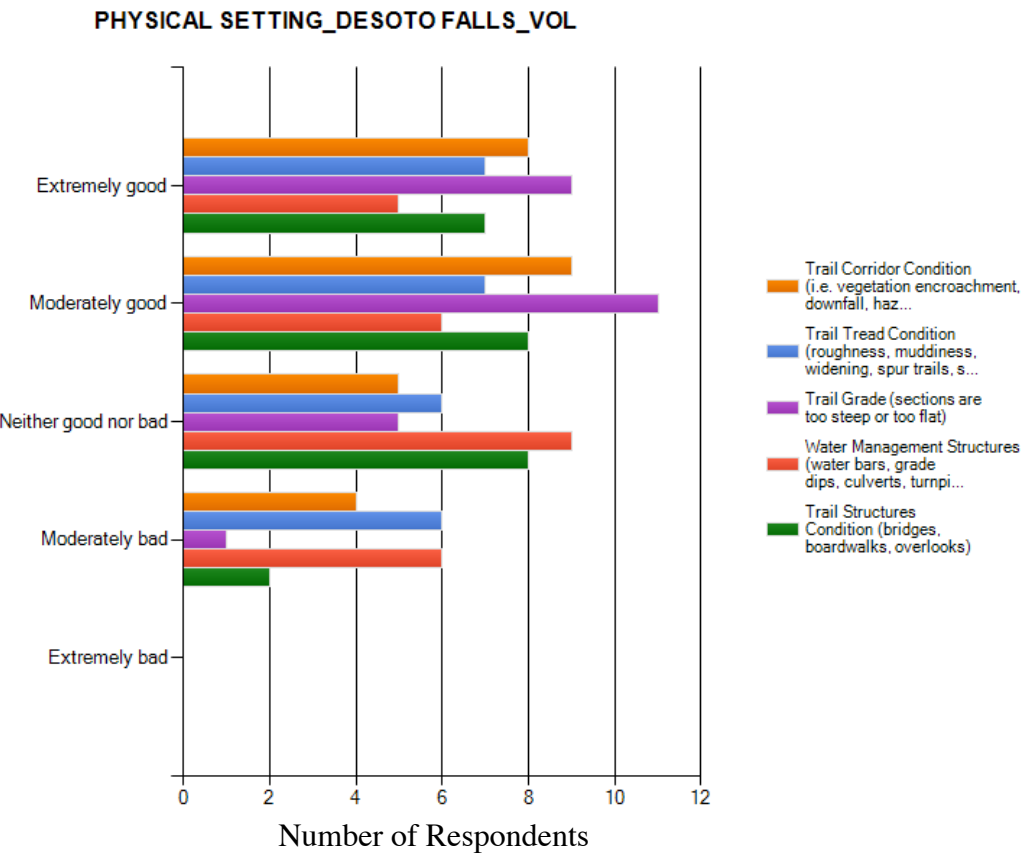
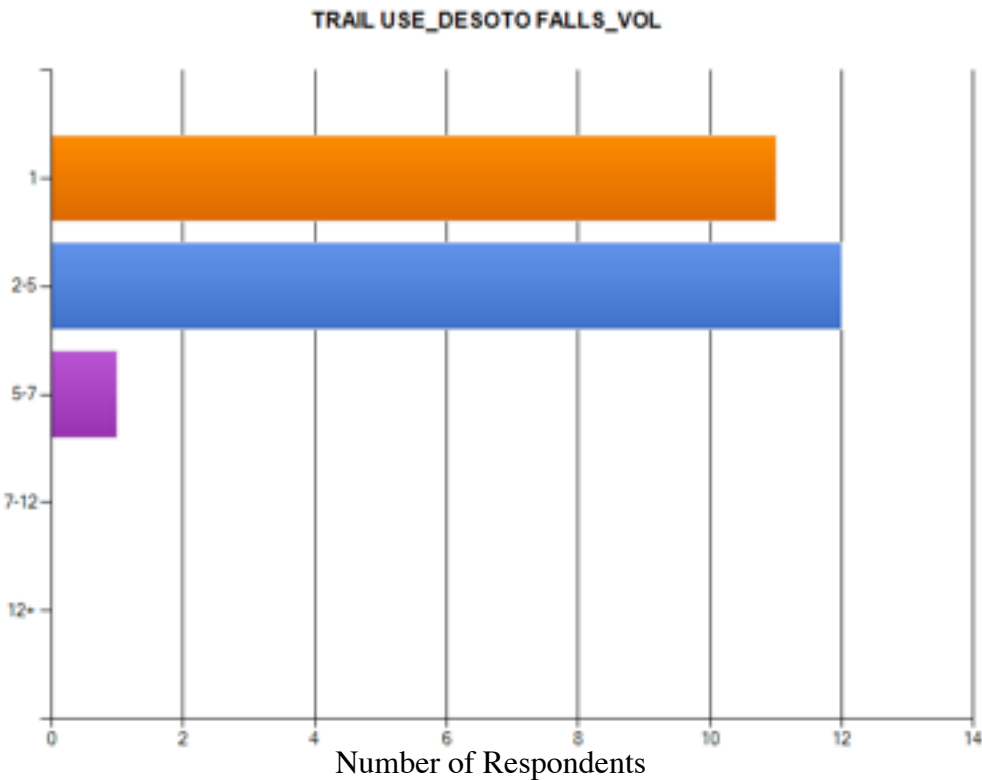


### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_DESOTO FALLS\_USFS

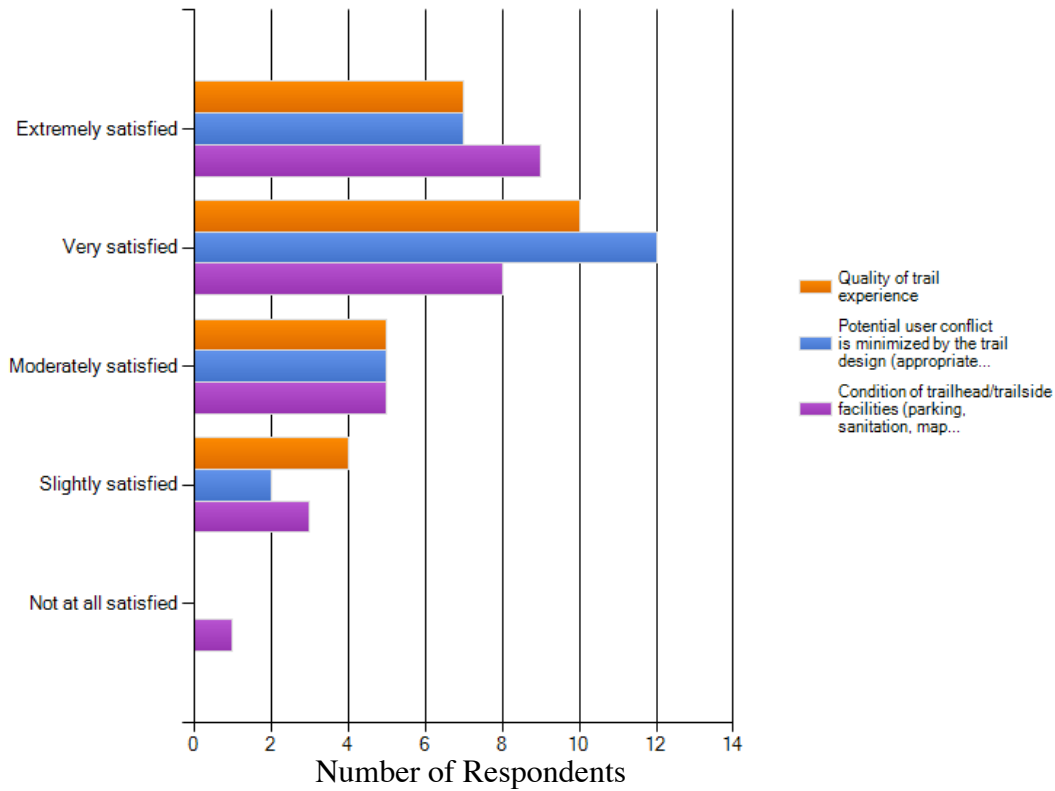




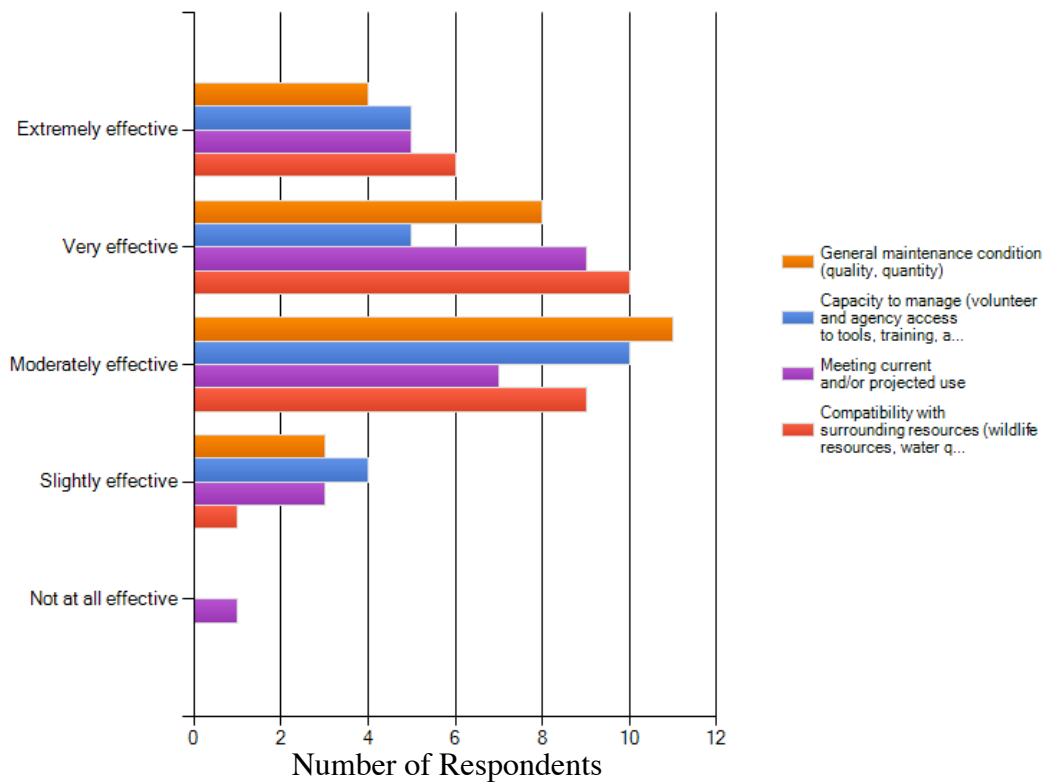
# Survey Results: Volunteers



**SOCIAL SETTING\_DESOTO FALLS\_VOL**



**MANAGERIAL SETTING\_DESOTO FALLS\_VOL**



## Volunteer Group Comments:

### Mountain High Hikers:

Don't know history. The trail has been maintained by our group (Mountain High Hikers) for the last 5 years, not sure who maintained it prior to that. Trail gets moderate usage from campers in area and tourists. We make 2 trips a years out here (@40 man hours per year) to do lopping, brushcutting, deadfall removal, and water bar (and water drain) cleaning. The trail has heavy erosion in many spots, and numerous water diversion structures should be redone. Would probably benefit from some trail hardening (gravel brought in). on the trail to the lower falls, there are a few spots on the switchbacks where hikers are "shortcutting" and causing problems

### Georgia Forest Watch:

History: No comment given

Maintenance: Some maintenance and trail work has been completed in this trail complex, presumably by the USFS.

Use: This trail system is very popular, partially because of the 3 waterfalls, but also because of the campground. This is especially true during summer months. The middle falls trail seems to get the most use.

Issues: In order to go to all of the authorized falls trails (lower and middle, upper is closed) you need to first go to the left, and then back the way you came to access the middle falls. The middle falls has an observation platform but a user created trail veers to the right so users can access the big pool at the top of the middle falls. This is beautiful, but the use is causing erosion.

The upper falls is the largest and most impressive, however due to excessive slope and no planning; this trail has been closed by the USFS. It appears that an alternate access from Highway 180, presumably user created, leads to the fire ring at the top of the upper falls. It would be nice to see some kind of loop system and reroutes conducted in this popular area so users have access to this area, but are accessing it in a more sustainable and responsible manner.



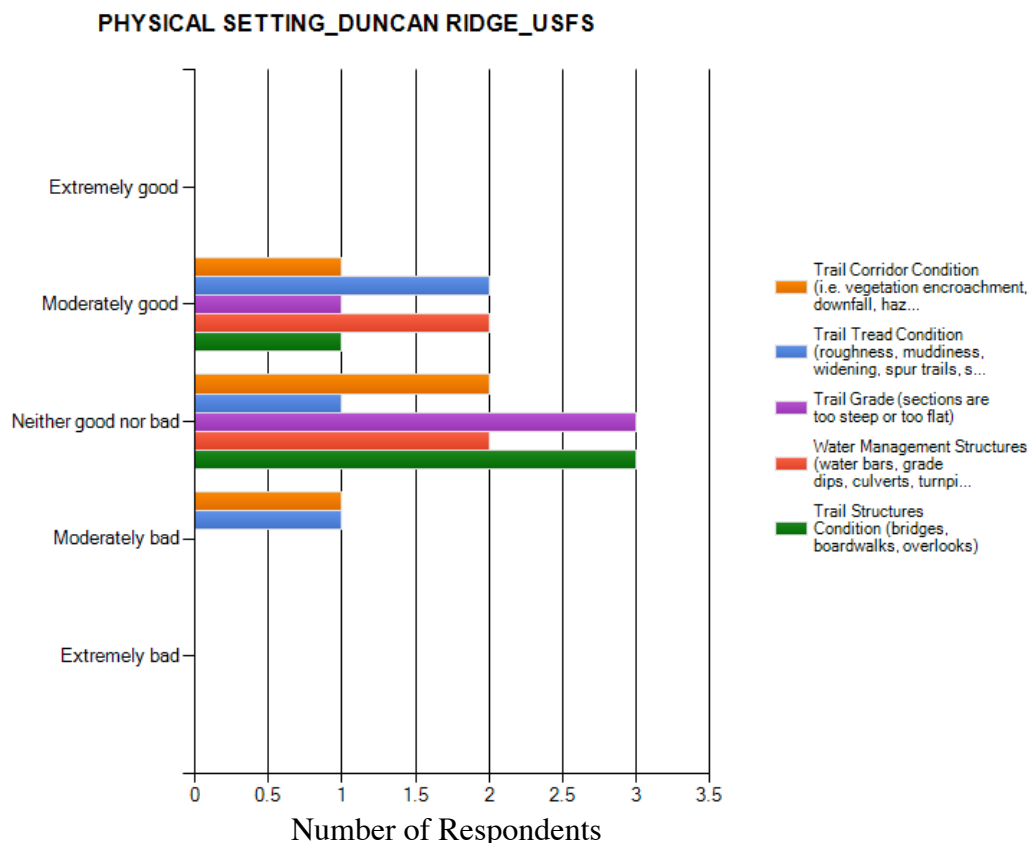
# TRAIL: DUNCAN RIDGE

## Survey Results: Forest Service

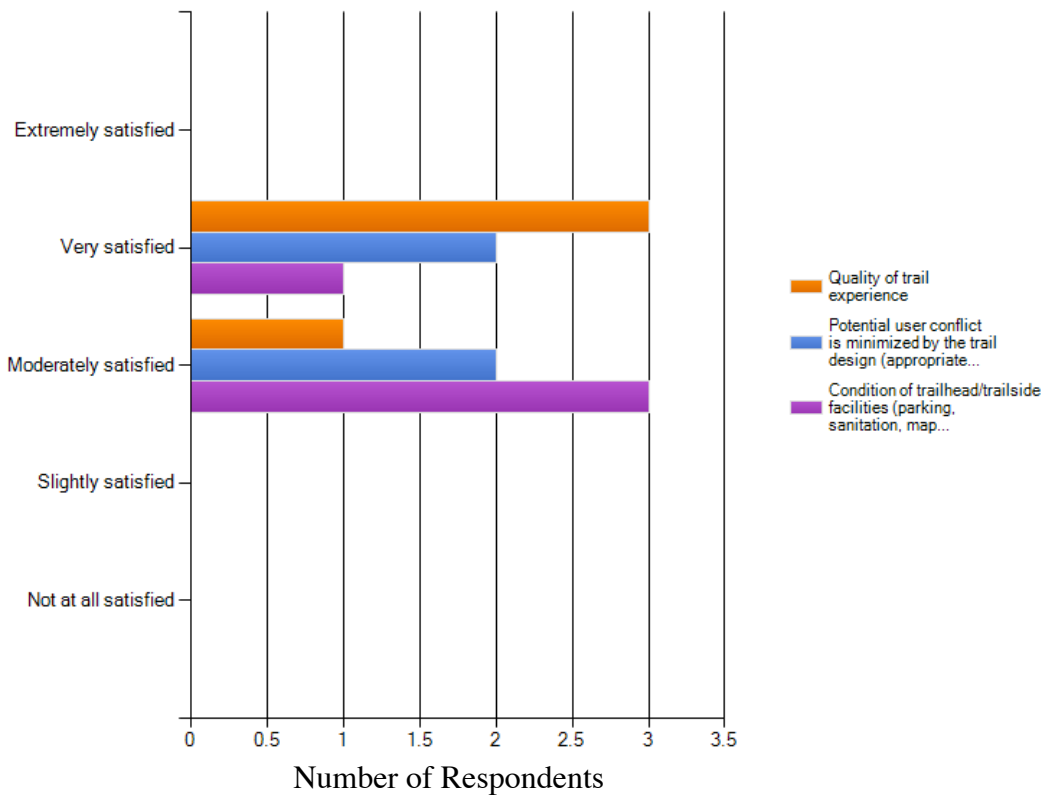
**History:** The trail was developed as the alternative route for the Appalachian Trail when attempts were made to extend the Blue Ridge Parkway into Georgia. Laid out by the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club, the Duncan Ridge National Recreation Trail was recognized when the Parkway extension did not go forward. In 1980, the trail from Payne Mountain south to the intersection with the Appalachian Trail near Long Creek Falls was incorporated into the route of the newly formed Benton MacKaye Trail.

**Maintenance Providers:** The Georgia Appalachian Trail Club has included this trail in their scope of work, but at this point their work is mainly focused on keeping the route brushed open. It does not get the attention they give to their other A.T. connecting trails. The Benton MacKaye Trail Association maintains the section that is co-located with the BMT.

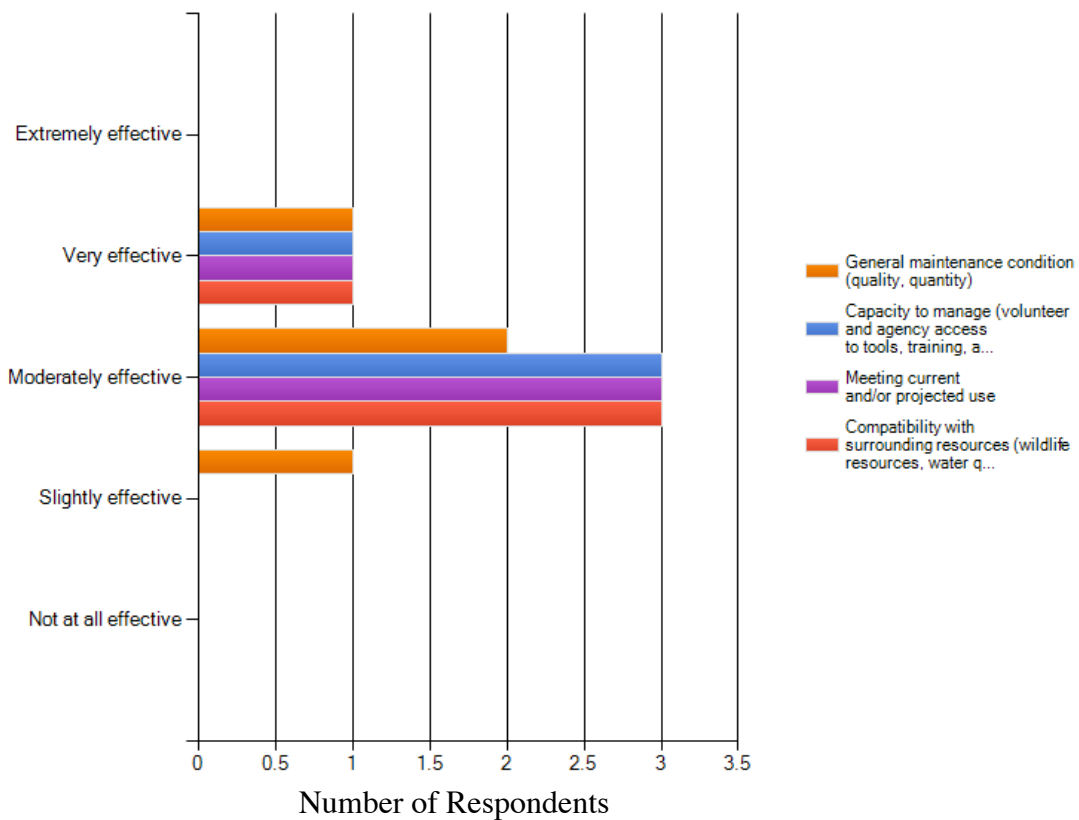
**Reasons Included In Assessment:** The route, like most trails laid out during the time it was established, is a heavily gap-to-ridgetop trail. Some sections, including parts of the co-located Benton Mackaye Trail, are very steep, and many of the sidehill areas have greater than optimum gradients. With proper relocation, this trail could see much greater use. At present, only the less strenuous sections of the trail get any regular use. There are no other long distance loops in the central part of the Chattahoochee National Forest, and an improved Duncan Ridge Trail would offer a better experience for the users, as well as mitigating resource impacts that would occur if the existing trail ever were to see increased use.



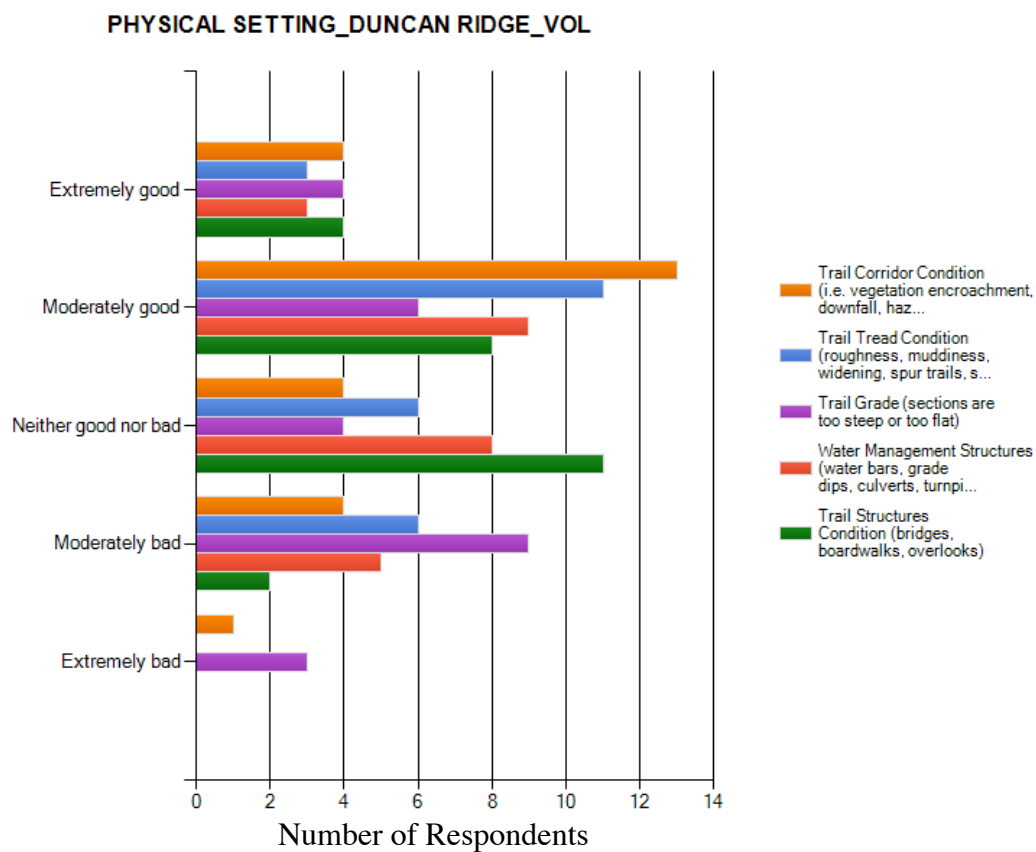
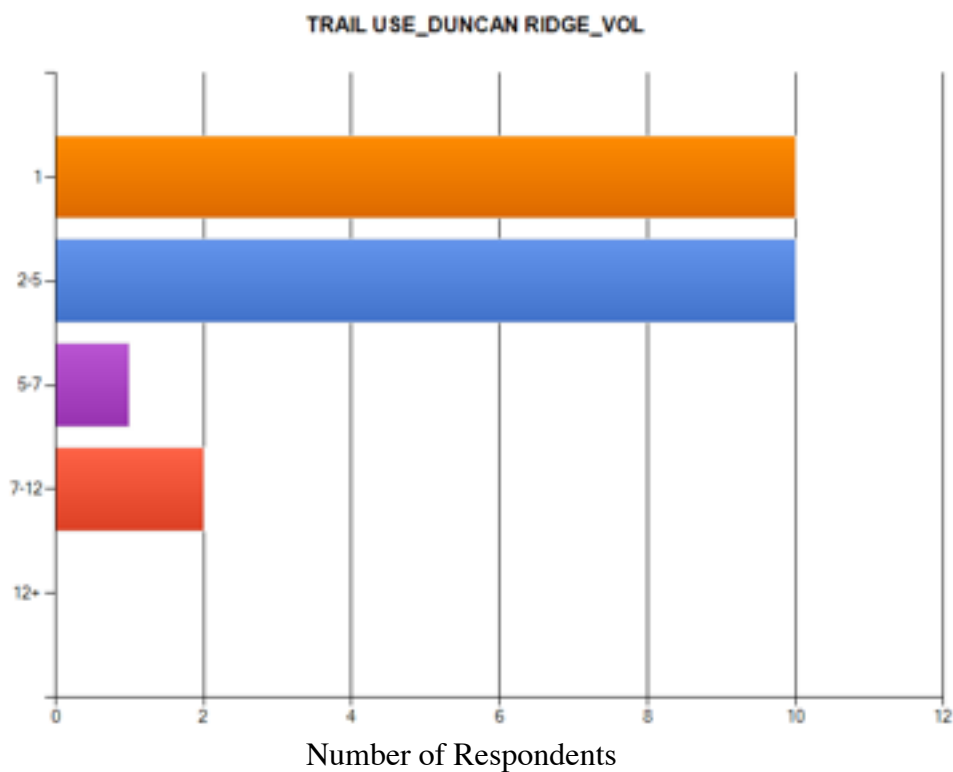
### SOCIAL SETTING\_DUNCAN RIDGE\_USFS



### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_DUNCAN RIDGE\_USFS

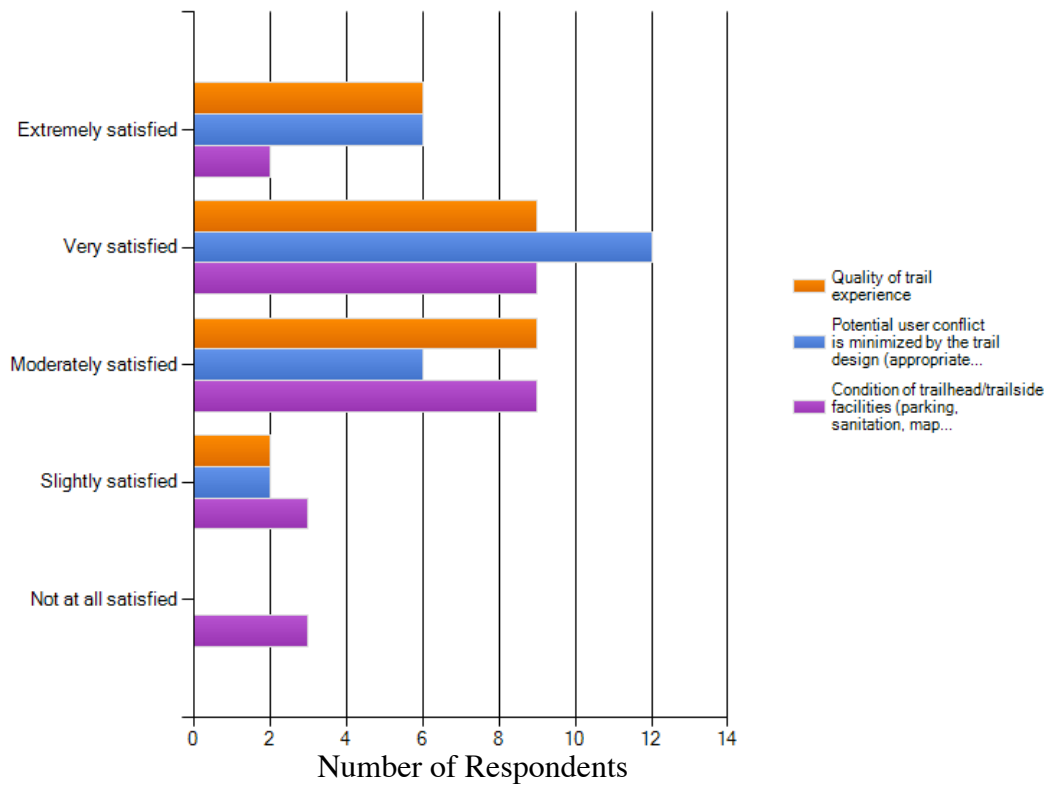


# Survey Results: Volunteers

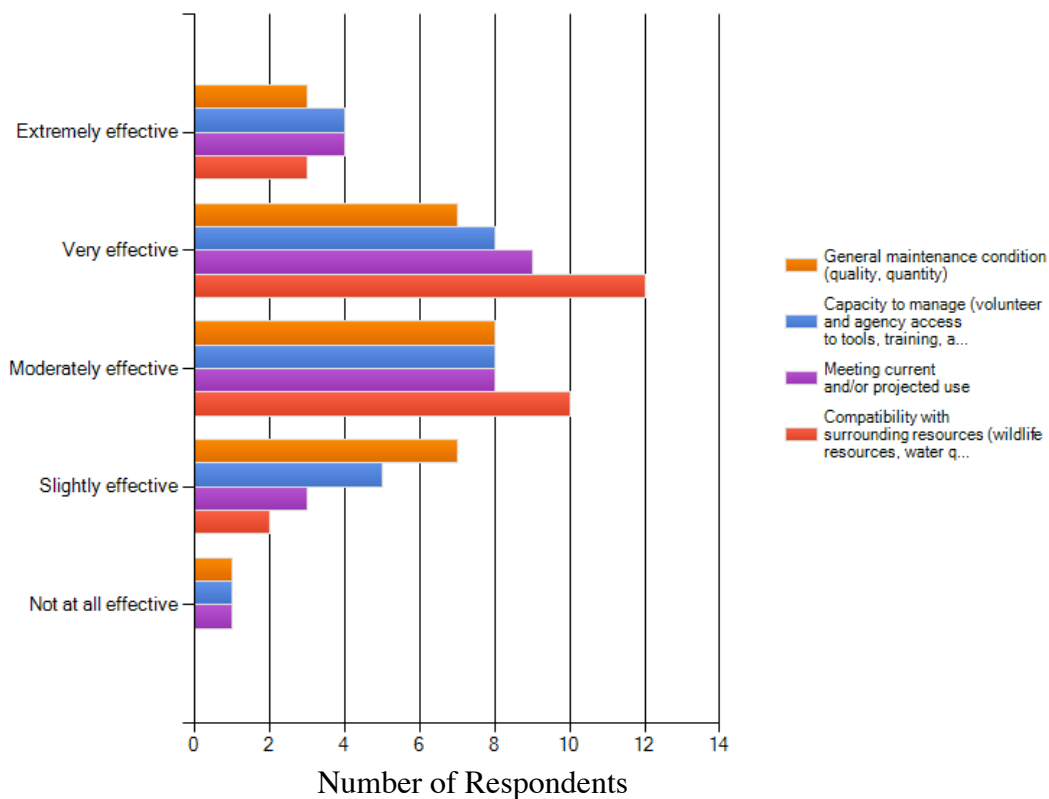




### SOCIAL SETTING\_DUNCAN RIDGE\_VOL



### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_DUNCAN RIDGE\_VOL



## **Volunteer Group Comments:**

Mountain High Hikers:

the trail was put in in the 70's as a possible reroute for the AT (the AT's present route was threatened by a proposed scenic hwy). The trail is lightly maintained by GATC. The usage is light. The trail was poorly laid out (by <Volunteers>), and is mostly fall line, goes up and down too much. Not a fun trail to hike. Should probably be abandoned except for the sections that are shared with BMT or Coosa trail.

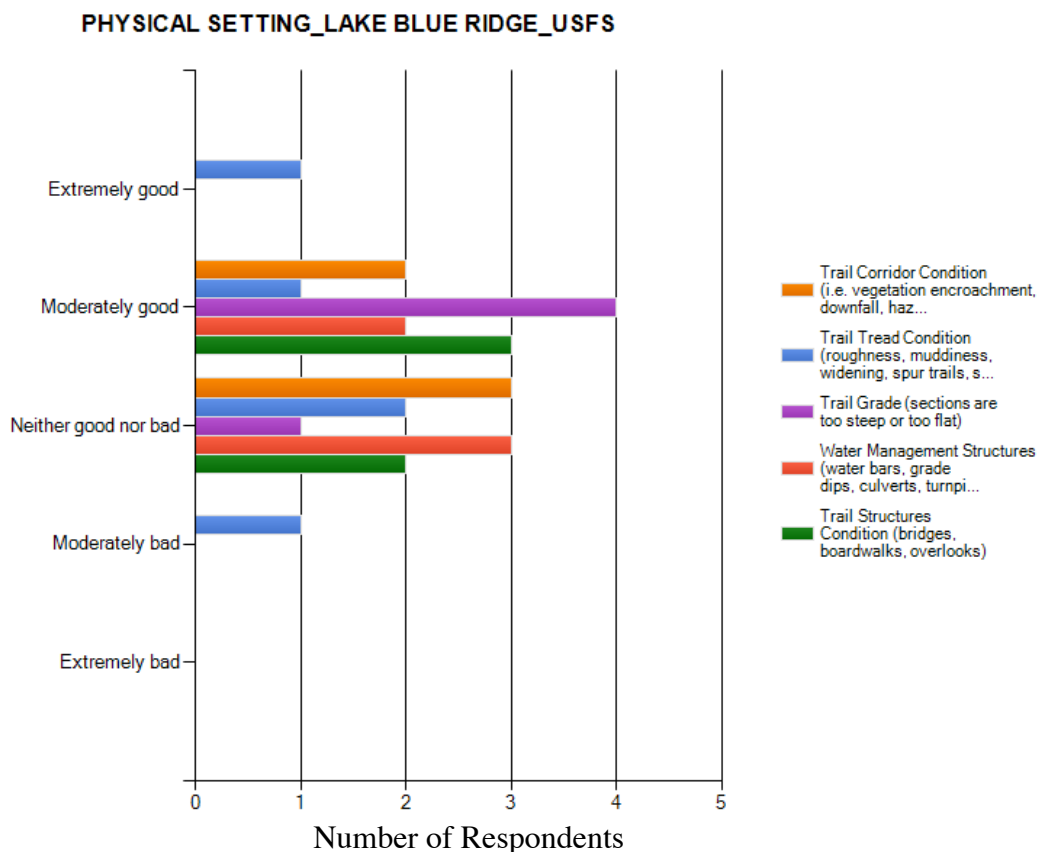
# TRAIL: LAKE BLUE RIDGE

## Survey Results: Forest Service

**History:** This trail was established by the Ranger District in the 1980's to enhance opportunities in the Lake Blue Ridge Recreation Area, primarily for users of the developed campground as well as day-use visitors to the picnic area. When the campground was decommissioned a few years ago, the entire Recreation Area was converted to day use, and this loop trail was kept open with the expectation that it would be used by the local community to access the lake as well as a fitness-type walk.

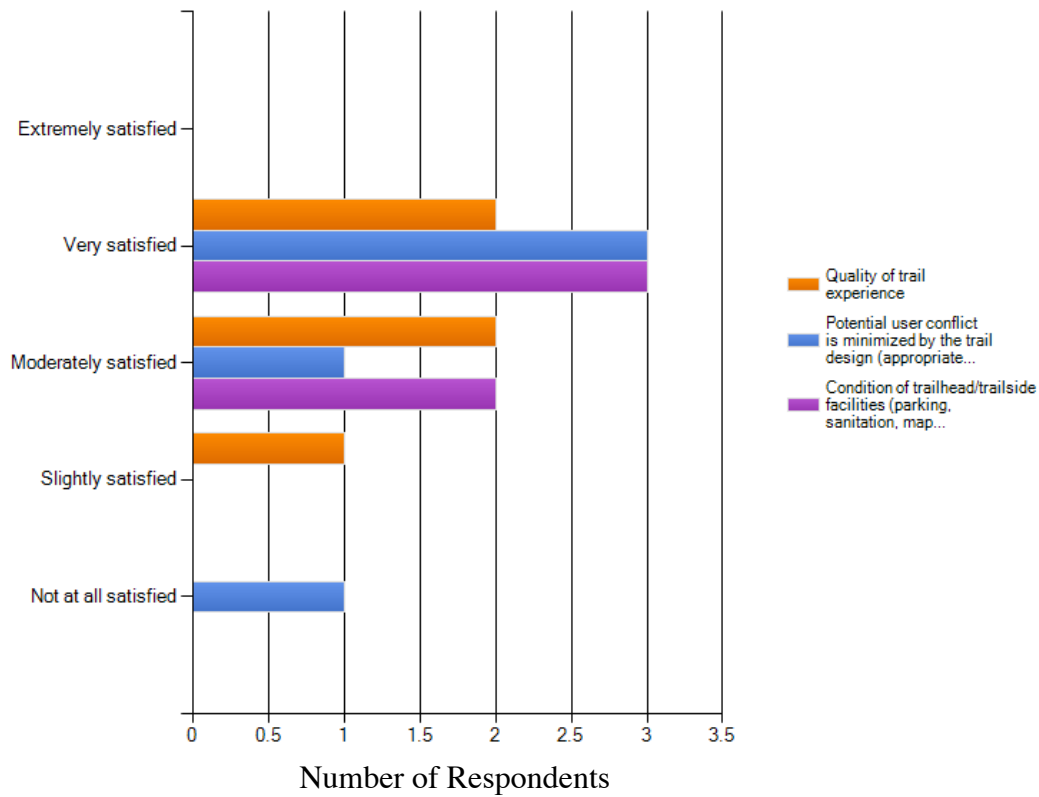
**Maintenance Providers:** Blue Ridge Ranger District personnel do occasional work.

**Reasons Included In Assessment:** The route has some gradient issues, and as a short loop hike, there could be ways to make it more attractive to the local users.

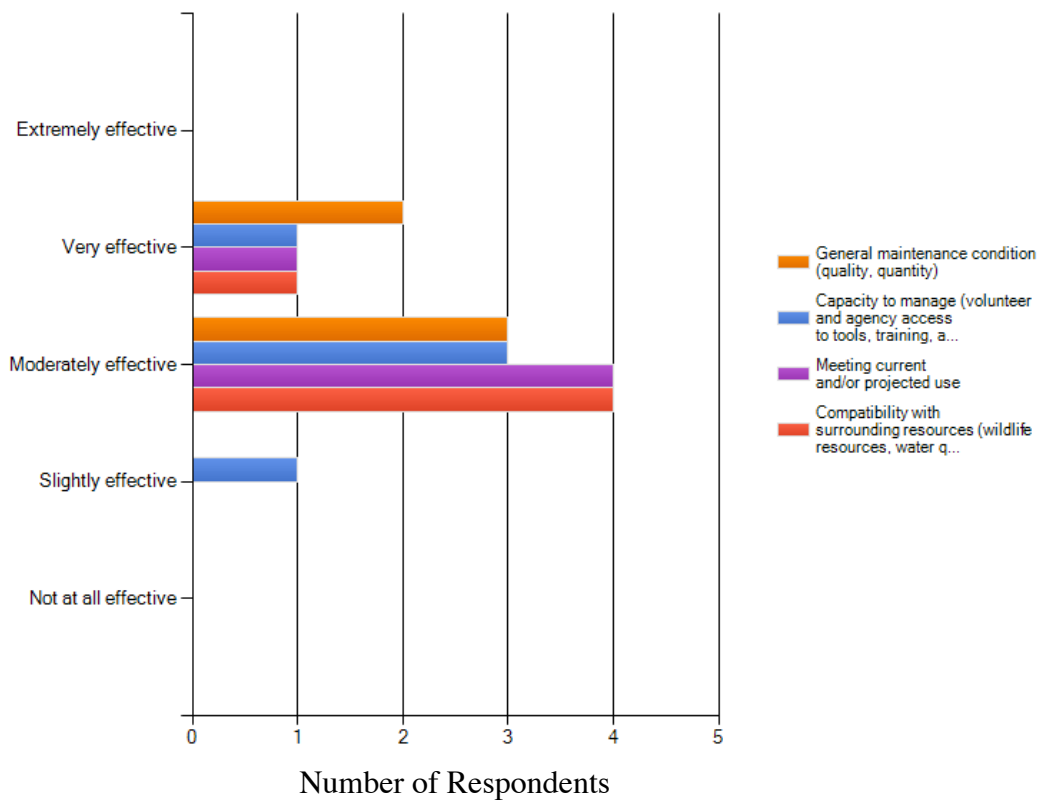




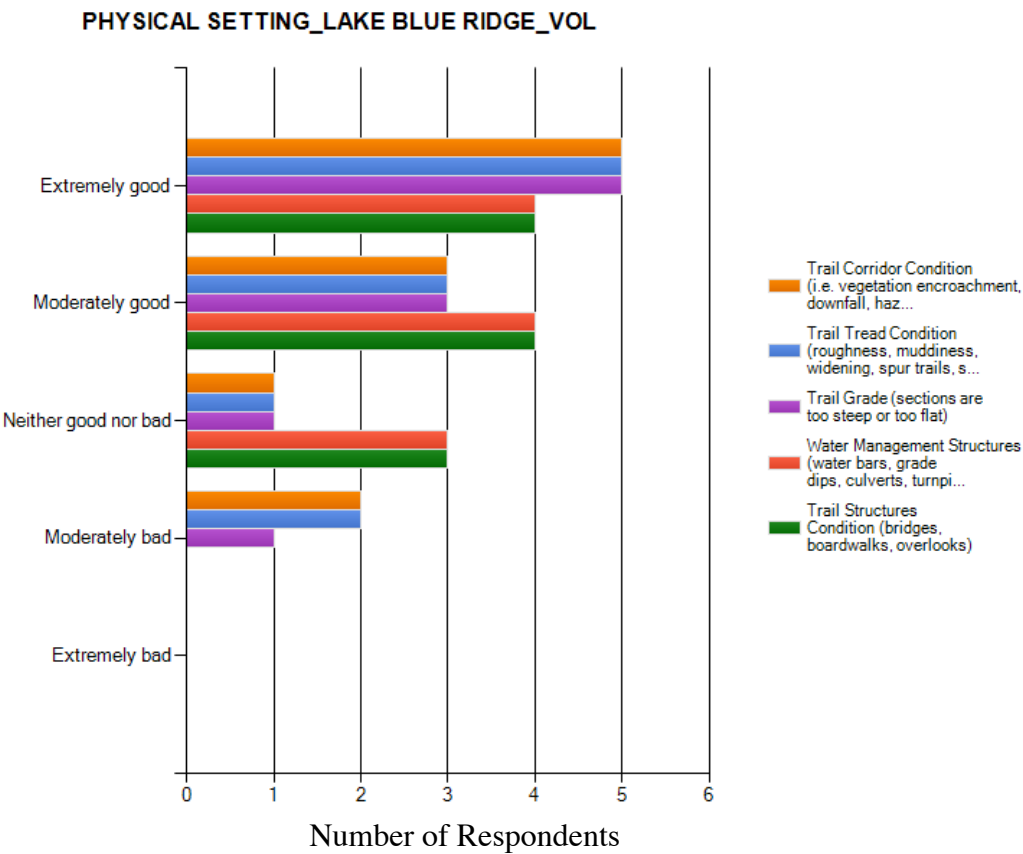
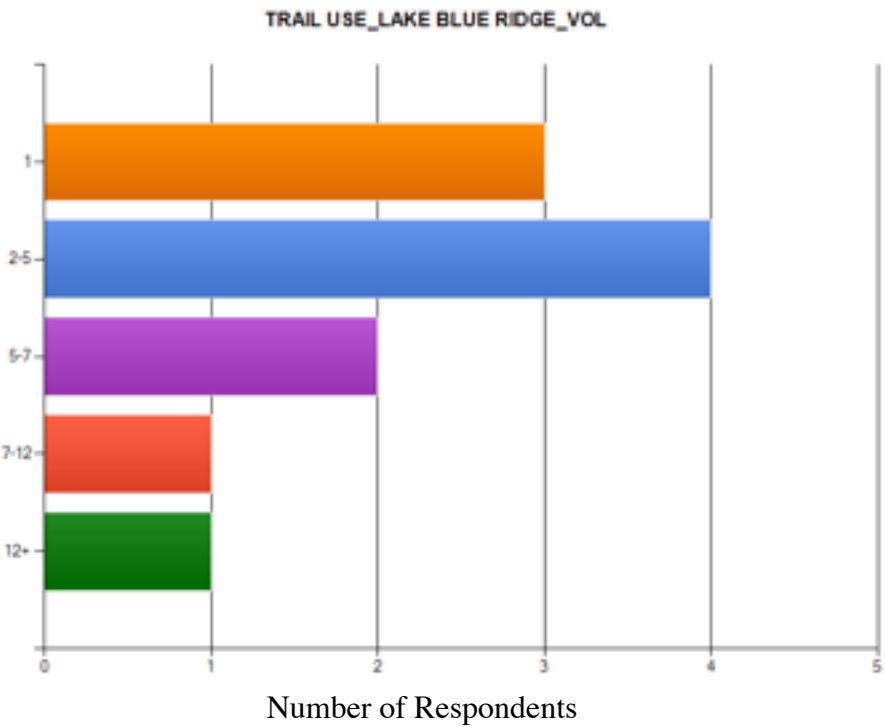
### SOCIAL SETTING\_LAKE BLUE RIDGE\_USFS



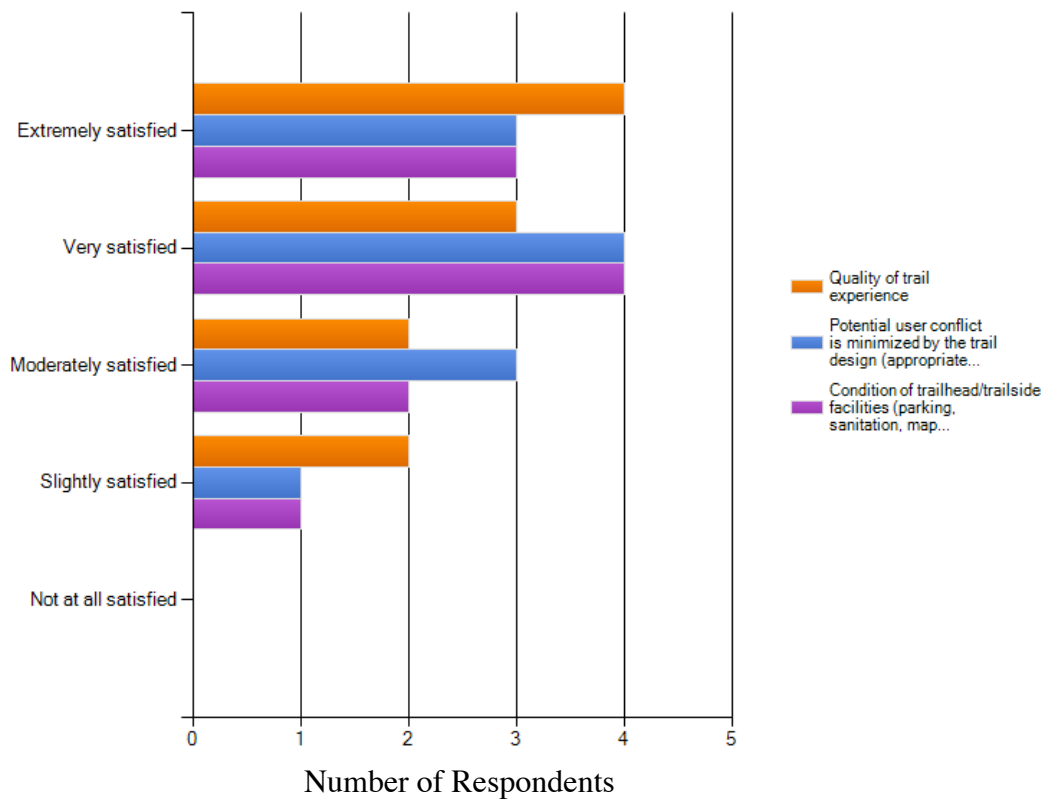
### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_LAKE BLUE RIDGE\_USFS



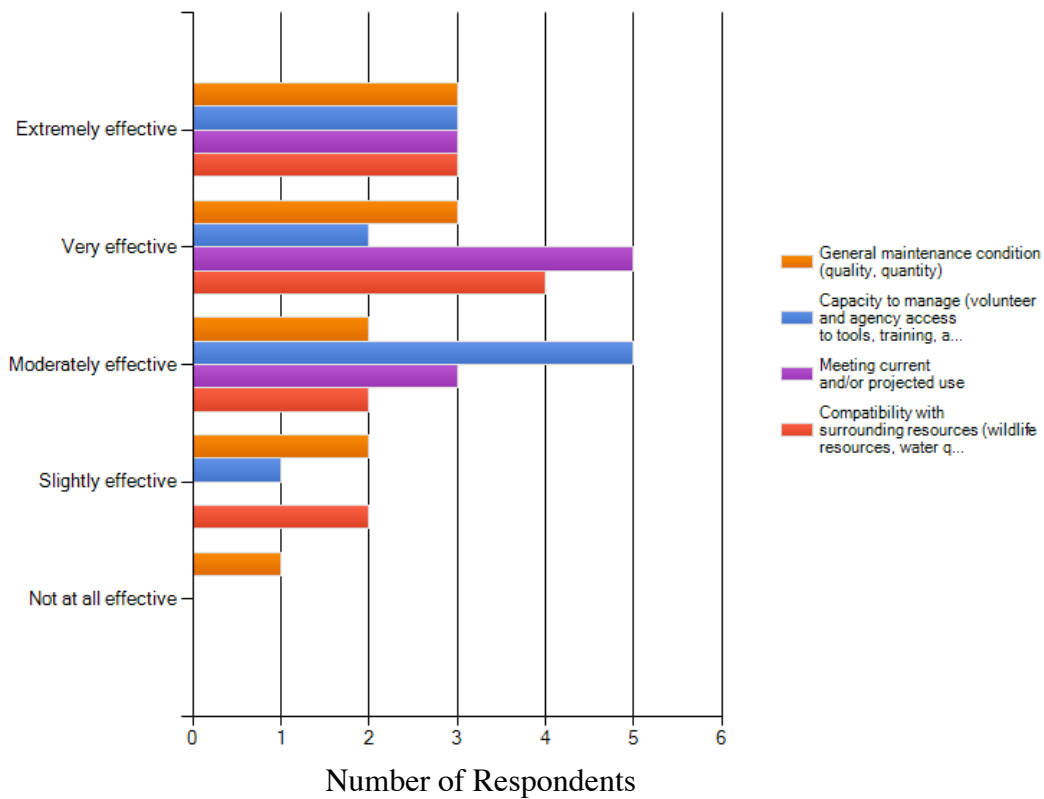
# Survey Results: Volunteers



### SOCIAL SETTING\_LAKE BLUE RIDGE\_VOL



### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_LAKE BLUE RIDGE\_VOL





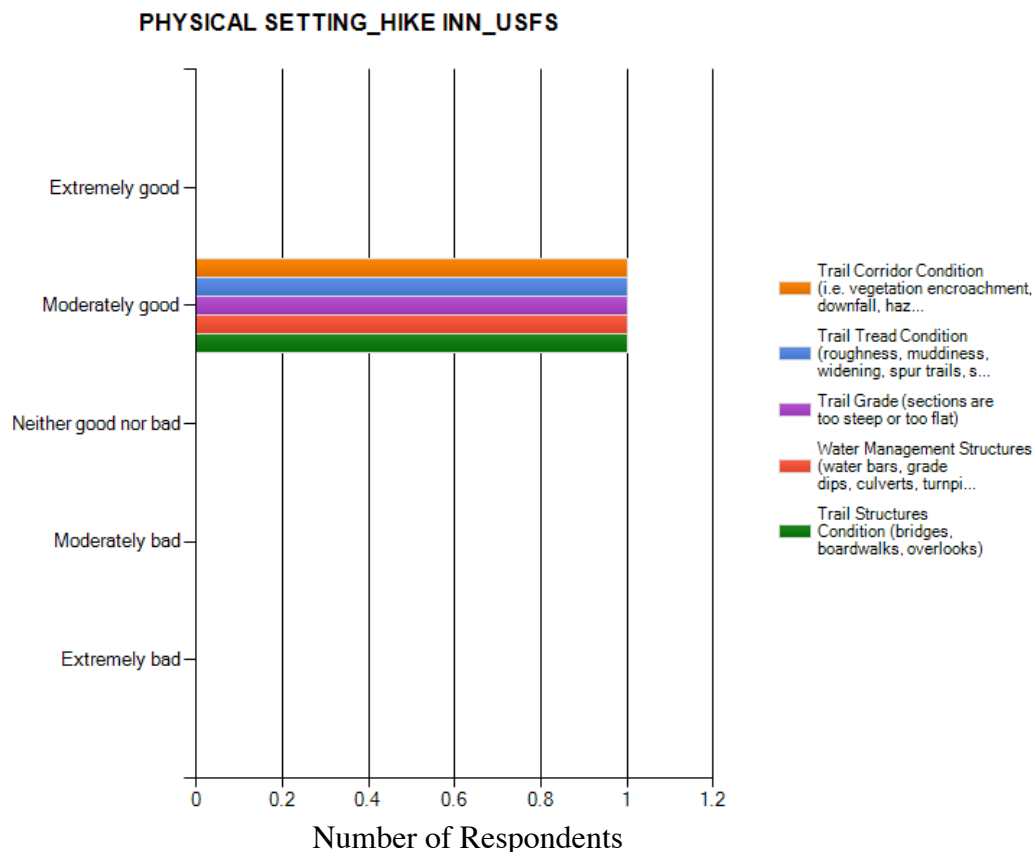
# TRAIL: LEN FOOTE HIKE INN

## Survey Results: Forest Service

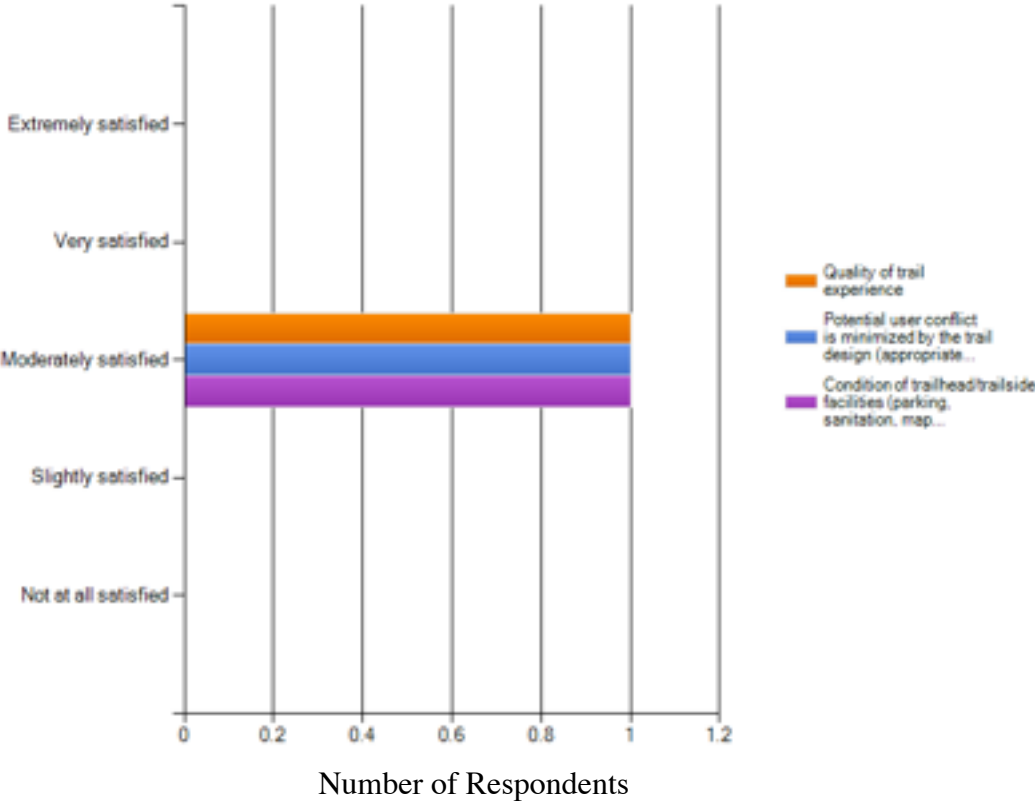
**History:** This trail was established by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to access the Hike Inn, a backcountry lodge on State property northeast of Amicalola Falls State Park that is surrounded by National Forest land. The initial route to the lodge was built by a State Park trail crew when the lodge was opened in 1998. A few years later the trail was extended north of the lodge to tie in with the A.T. Approach Trail near Frosty Mountain. This second phase was built by the GATC.

**Maintenance Providers:** The GATC includes this trail in their scope of work, since it ties into the A.T. Approach Trail on both of its termini. Occasional work is done with other volunteers as part of the Hike Inn operation.

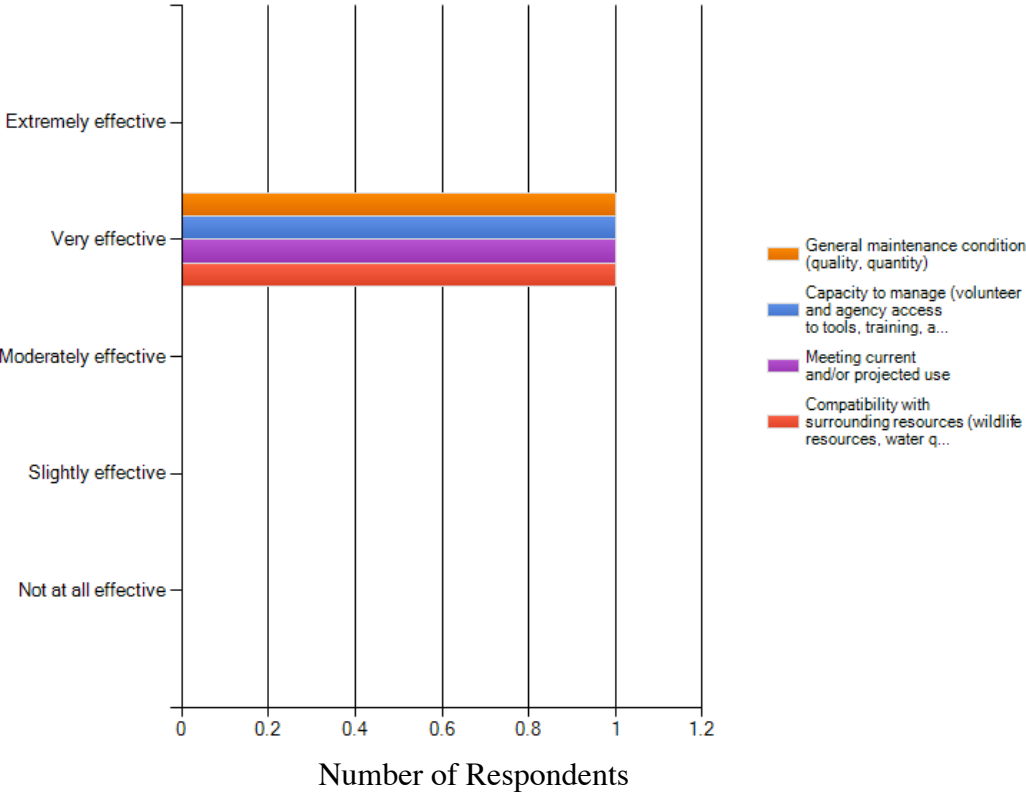
**Reasons Included In Assessment:** The trail includes some steep sections and several water crossings. It gets heavy use from both Hike Inn visitors, as well as other hikers accessing the A.T. or making a loop hike out of Amicalola Falls State Park. It also lies within the Ed Jenkins National Recreation Area. Better routing of some sections and improvements to the water crossings would enhance visitor enjoyment and reduce resource impacts.



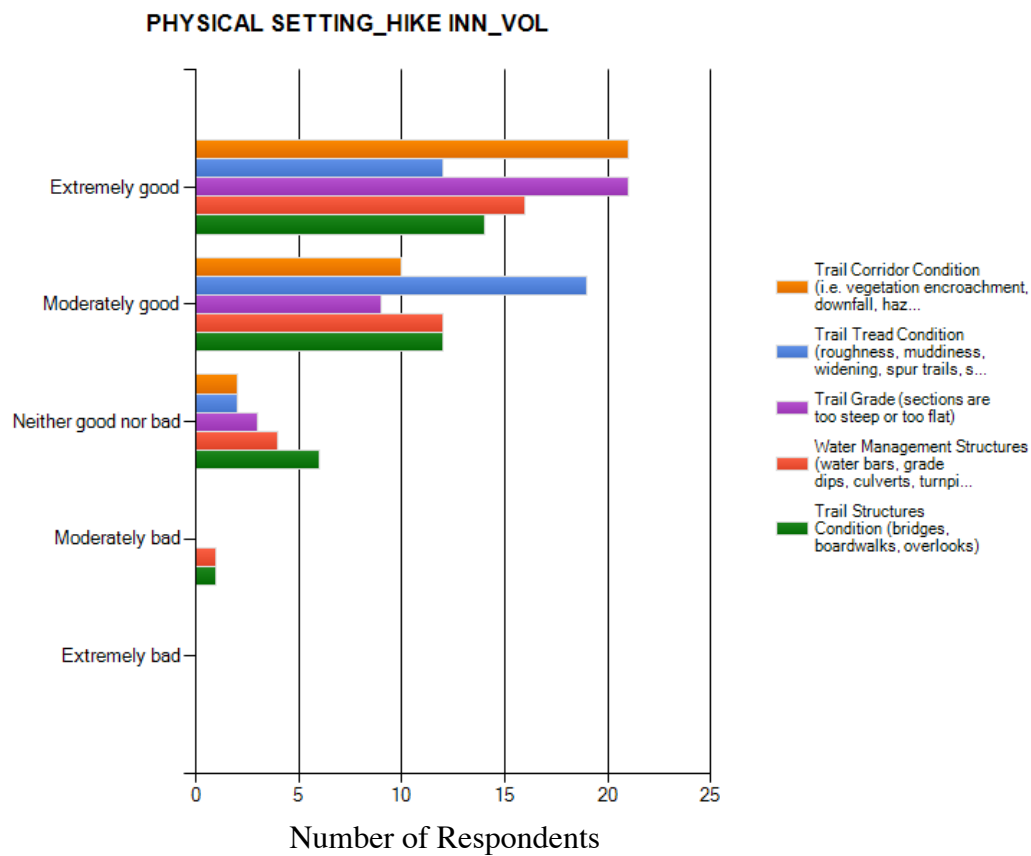
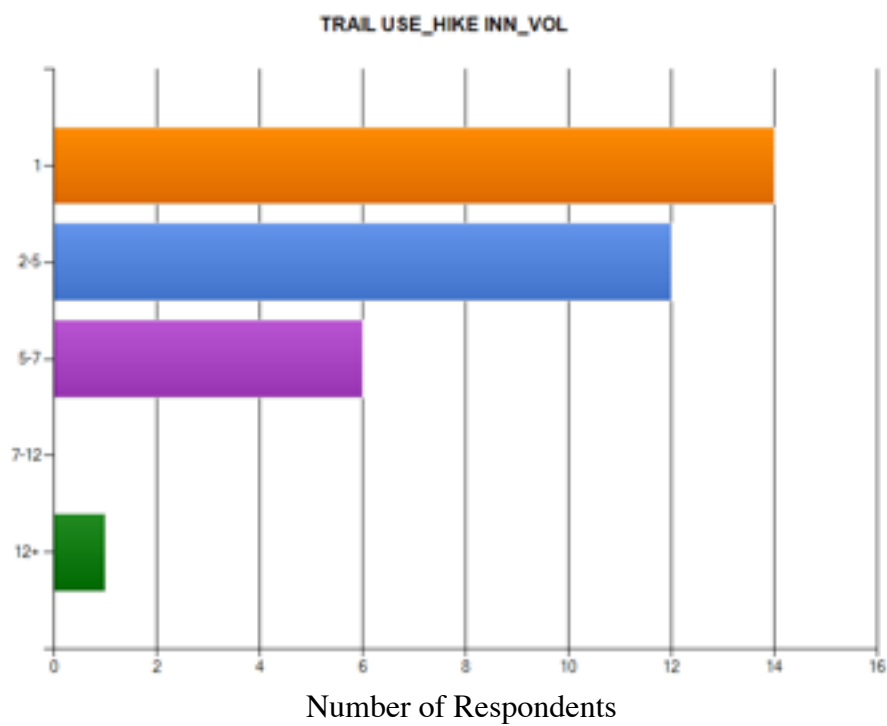
SOCIAL SETTING\_HIKE INN\_USFS



MANAGERIAL SETTING\_HIKE INN\_USFS

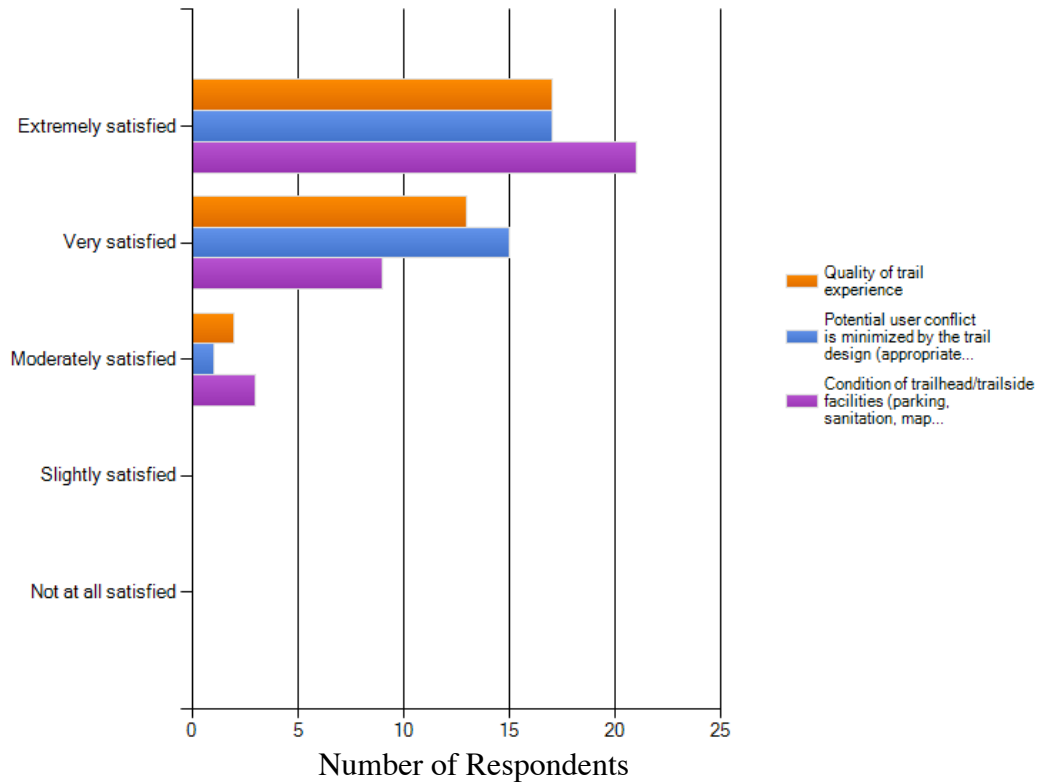


# Survey Results: Volunteers

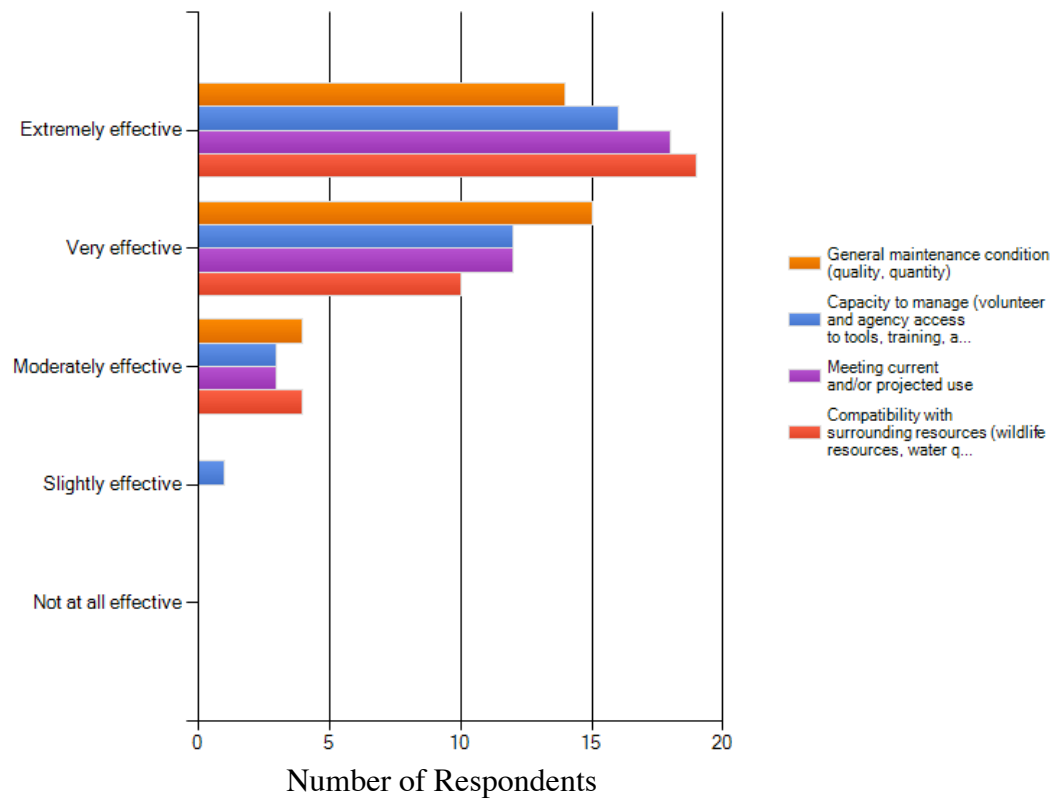




**SOCIAL SETTING\_HIKE INN\_VOL**



**MANAGERIAL SETTING\_HIKE INN\_VOL**



## **Volunteer Group Comments:**

Mountain High Hikers:

Don't know history, trail maintained by GATC, trail gets HEAVY usage both by the inn guests, and well as a nice 10 mile loop trail (using the AT also) from the park. Heavy day usage out of Atlanta. No know issues

Georgia Forest Watch:

History: Constructed by the GA DNR to access the hike in Lodge

Maintenance: Parts of this are maintained by the Appalachian Trail Club.

Use: Popular

Issues: Limited sight distance.

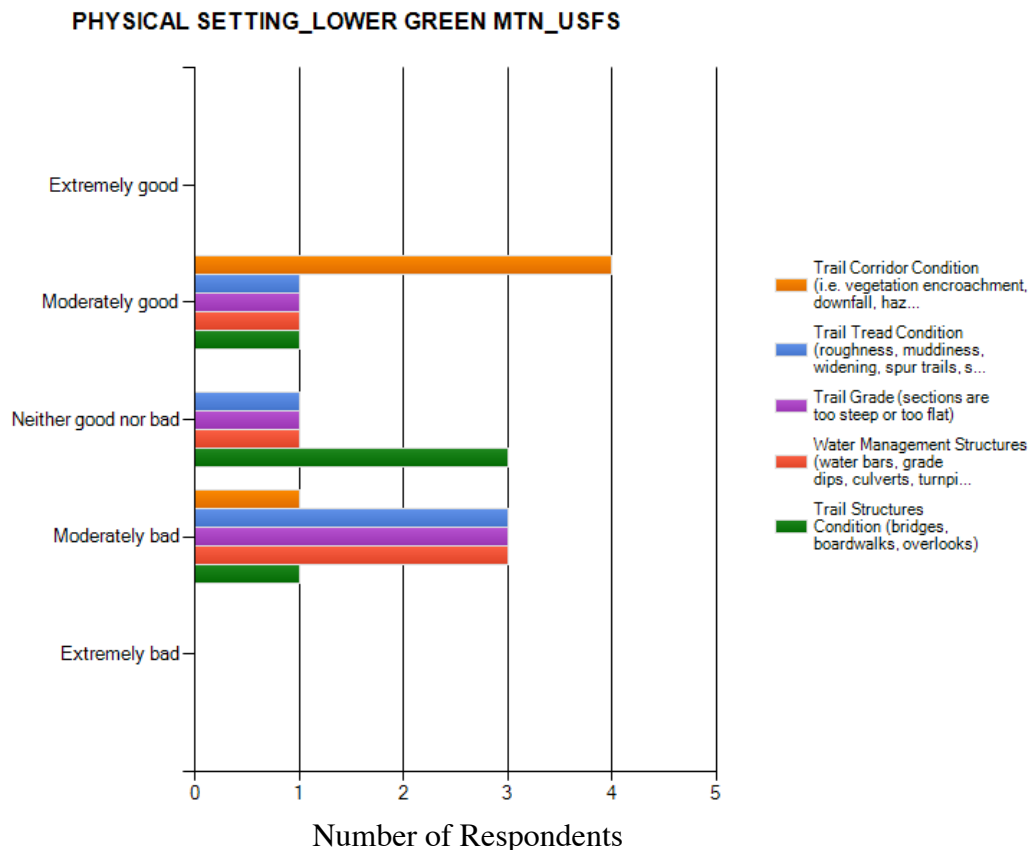
# TRAIL: LOWER/UPPER GREEN MOUNTAIN

## Survey Results: Forest Service

**History:** This trail was established in the mid-1980's by the Ranger District to expand the multi-use trail opportunities in the Aska area. It was planned so as to utilize the trailhead for the Stanley Gap and Flat Creek Loop trails.

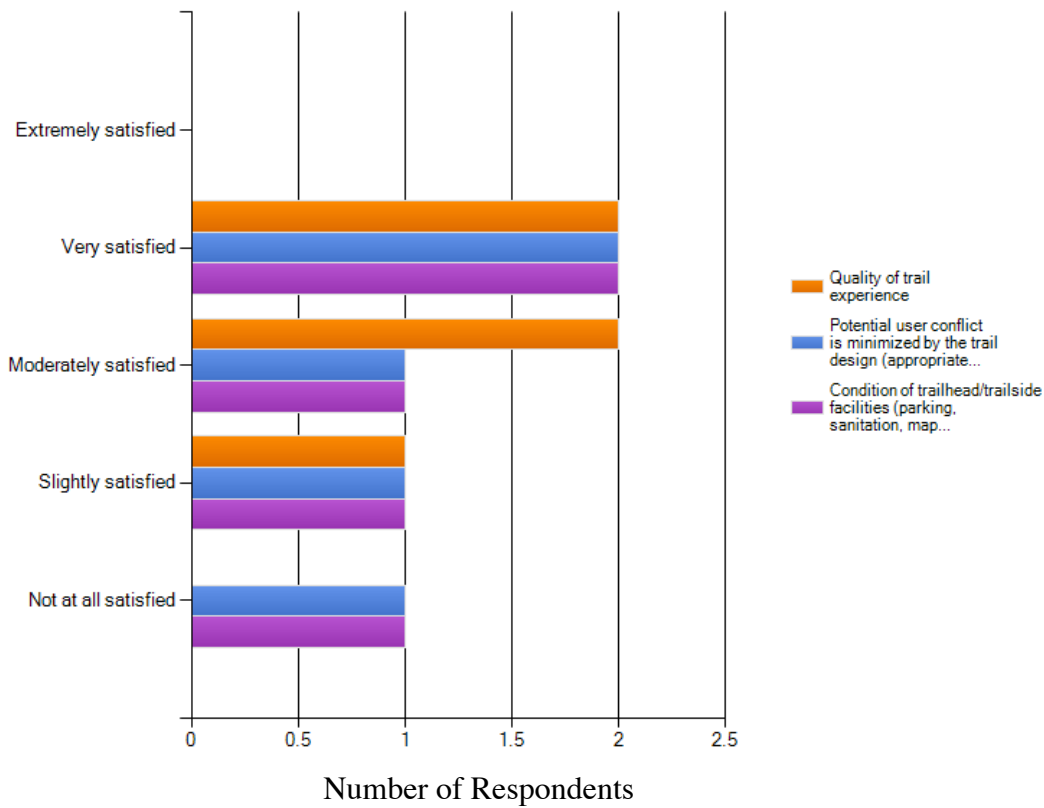
**Maintenance Providers:** There is not maintenance being done on this trail on a regular basis, with the exception of occasional clearing work by Ranger District Personnel. A maintenance contract was utilized by the Forest Service two or three years ago to rework and establish dips along the route.

**Reasons Included In Assessment:** The trail has some badly eroded sections, goes through a section of private land via an easement agreement, and has limited parking on it's eastern terminus. Better routing and access would enhance visitor enjoyment and reduce resource impacts.

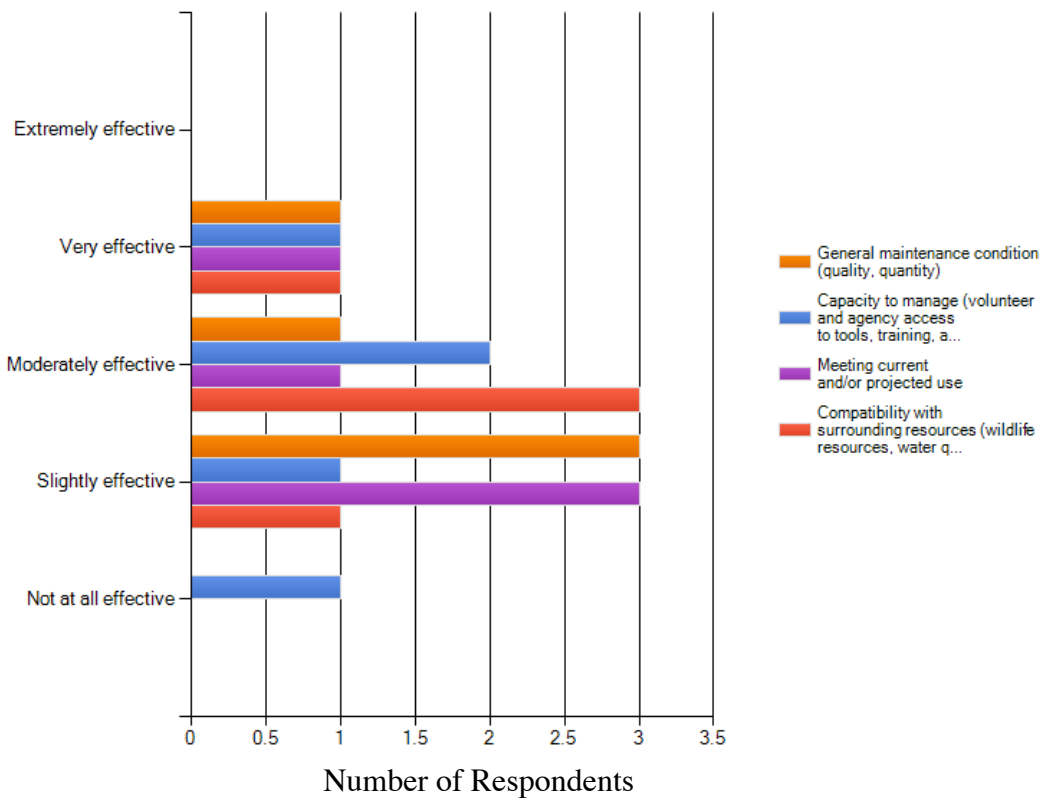




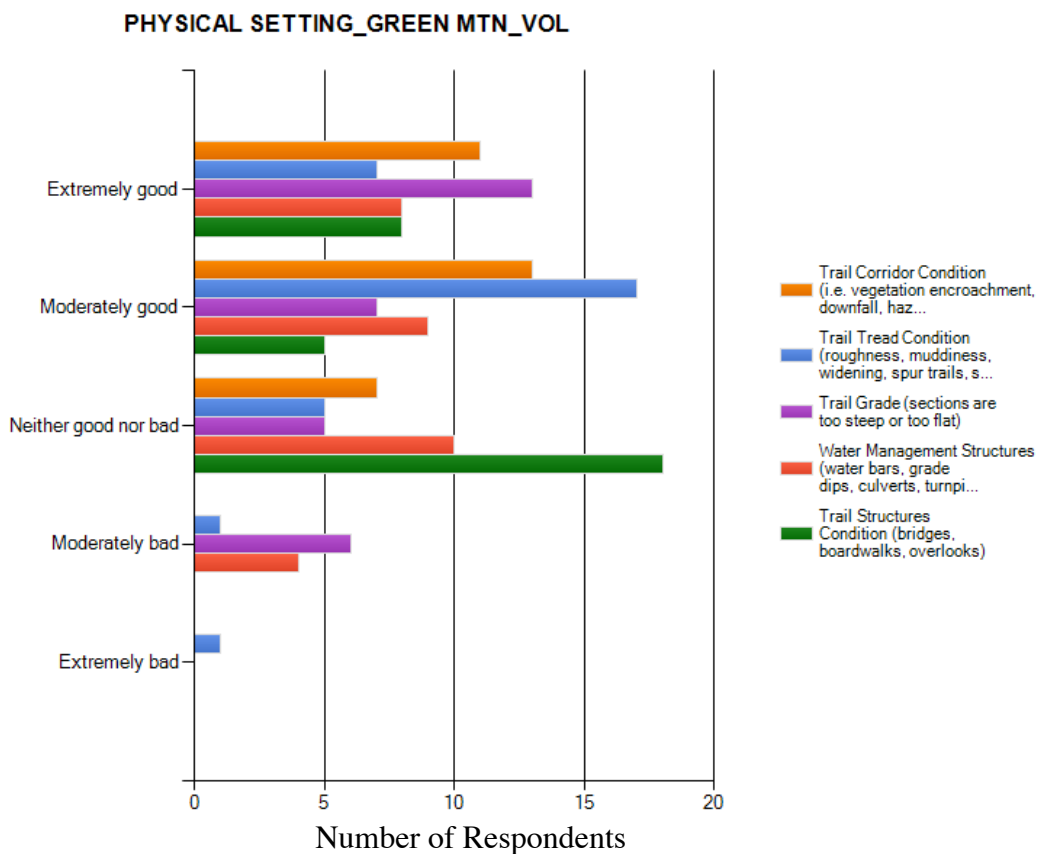
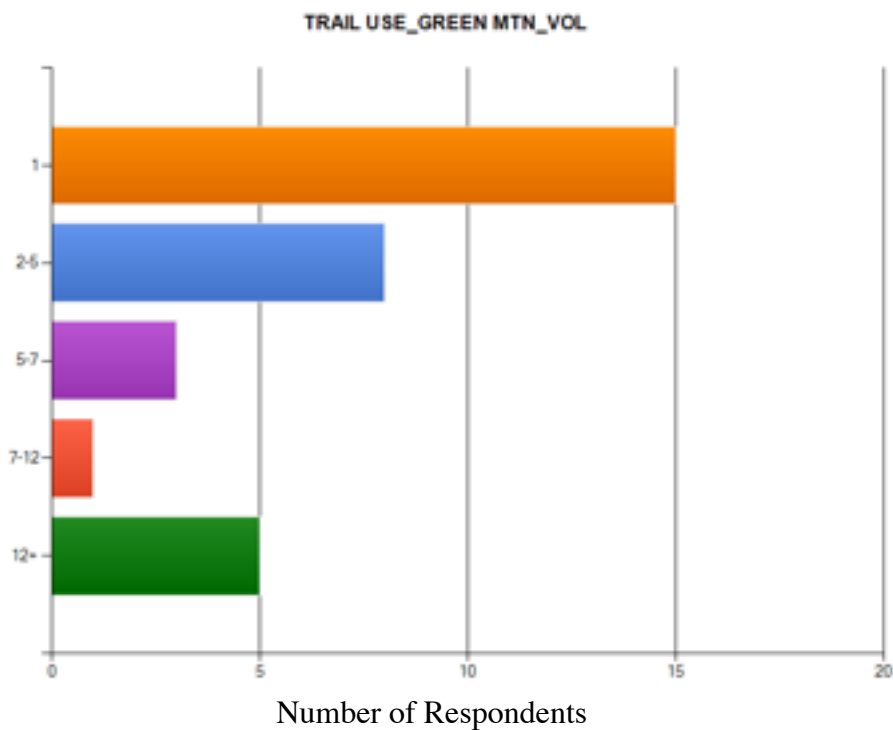
### SOCIAL SETTING\_LOWER GREEN MTN\_USFS



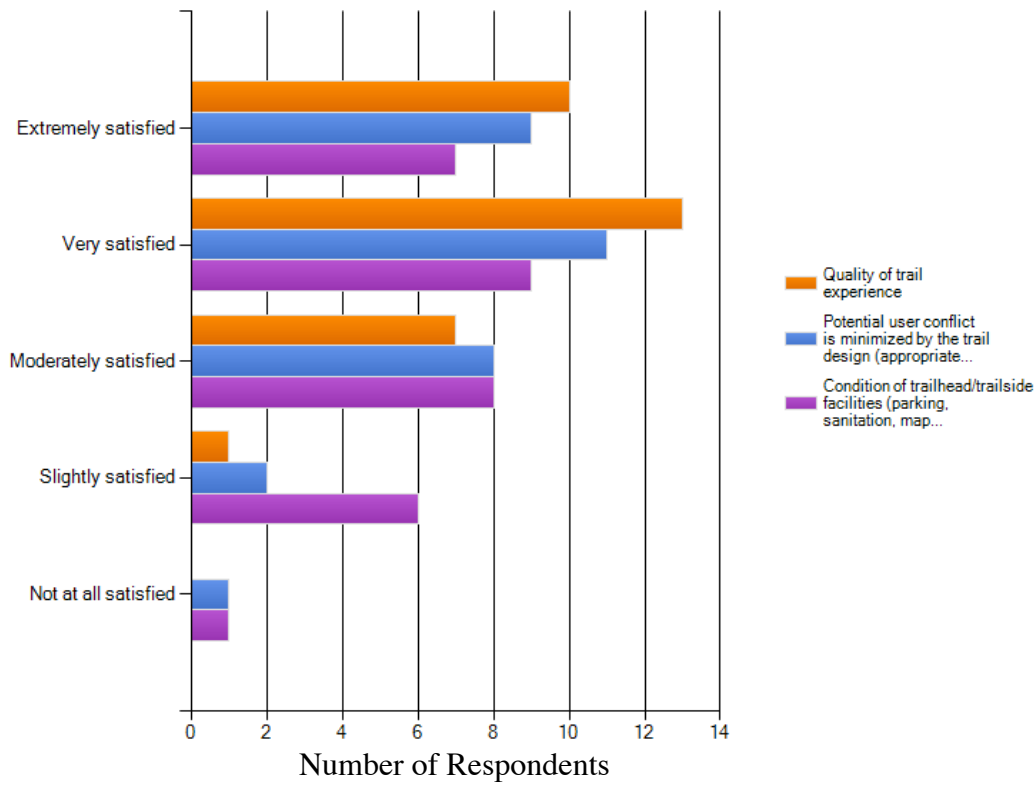
### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_LOWER GREEN MTN\_USFS



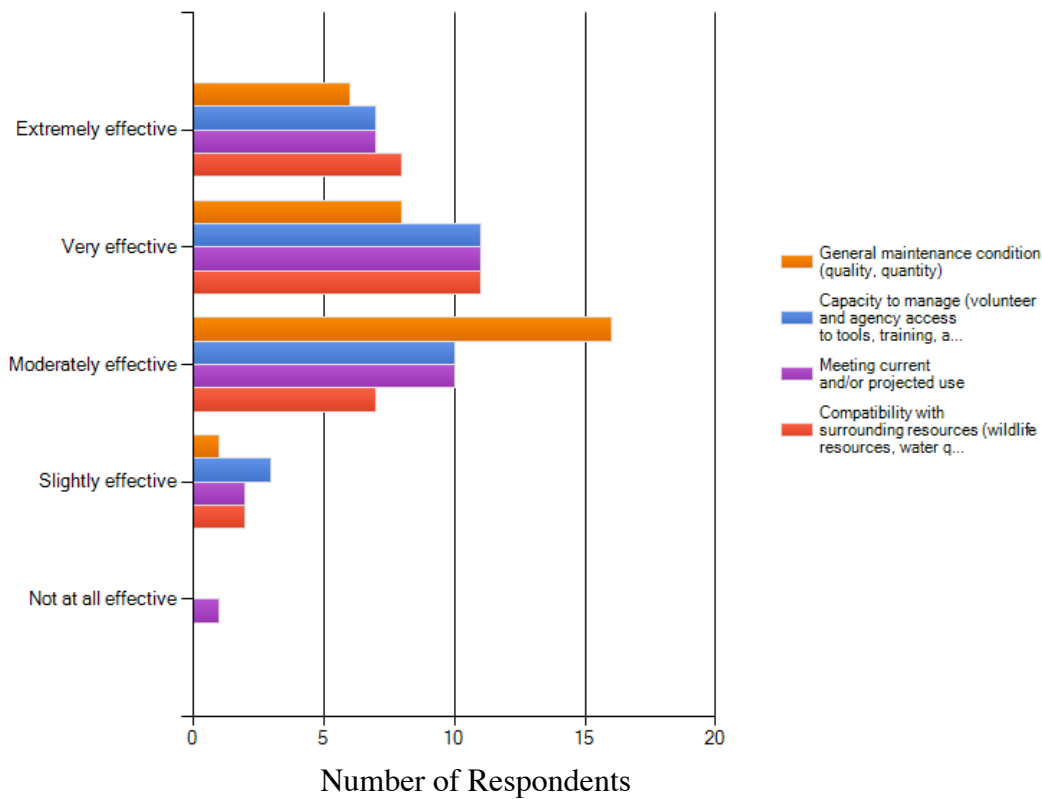
# Survey Results: Volunteers



**SOCIAL SETTING\_GREEN MTN\_VOL**



**MANAGERIAL SETTING\_GREEN MTN\_VOL**





## **Volunteer Group Comments:**

### **IMBA/SORBA:**

History of trail: Early 90s. Types, amounts, and seasonality of use the trail receives: If this is the trail we believe it is, this trail doesn't get ridden much. It's very technical, and only ridden by a smallish group of local riders out of the local bike shop. Known problematic or recurring issues (natural resource and/or visitor management concerns/problems): None. Light use, very steep section that is hard to climb. (Bike shop in Blue Ridge, Tom)

### **Mountain High Hikers:**

Don't know the history or who maintains it. Receives moderate use in Spring summer and fall, less in the winter. Signage can be confusing if you don't know the trail, and the walk through the neighborhood at the top could use better signage, so spots with high erosion.

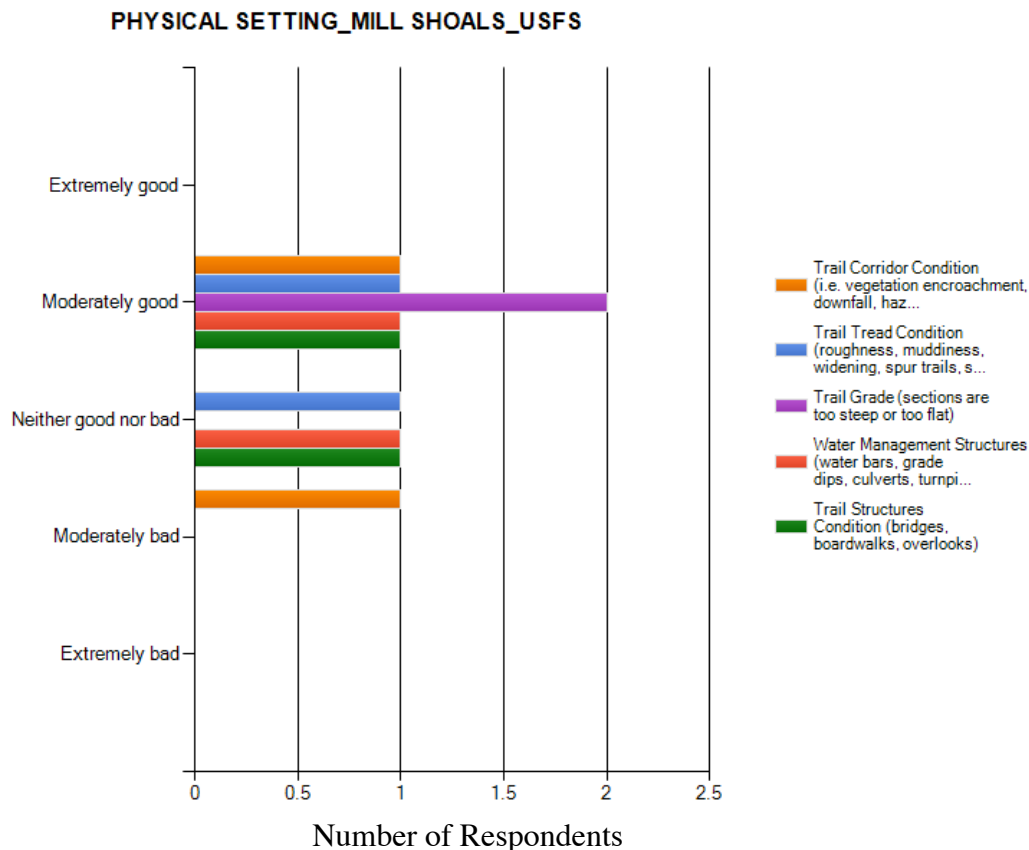
# TRAIL: MILL SHOALS

## Survey Results: Forest Service

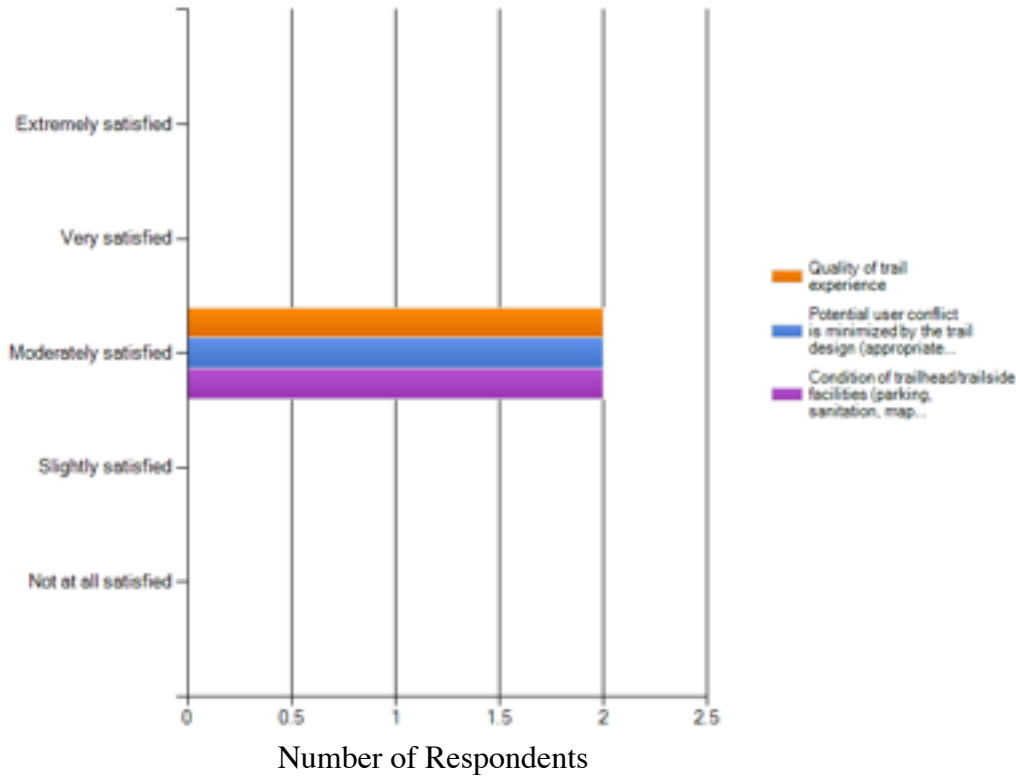
**History:** Part of the trail system in the Cooper Creek Scenic Area. This trail, along with the Shope Gap and Mill Shoals Trails, were established by the Ranger District in the late 1980's as part of a trail network in the Cooper Creek Scenic Area. Work was done by Forest Service personnel with some assistance from the mountain biking community. Initially the intent was to allow mountain bike use as well as hiking use on these trails, but the decision was never officially signed off on to allow the bike use.

**Maintenance Providers:** The Mountain High Hikers perform periodic maintenance, but not on a set schedule. Blue Ridge District personnel perform some occasional work.

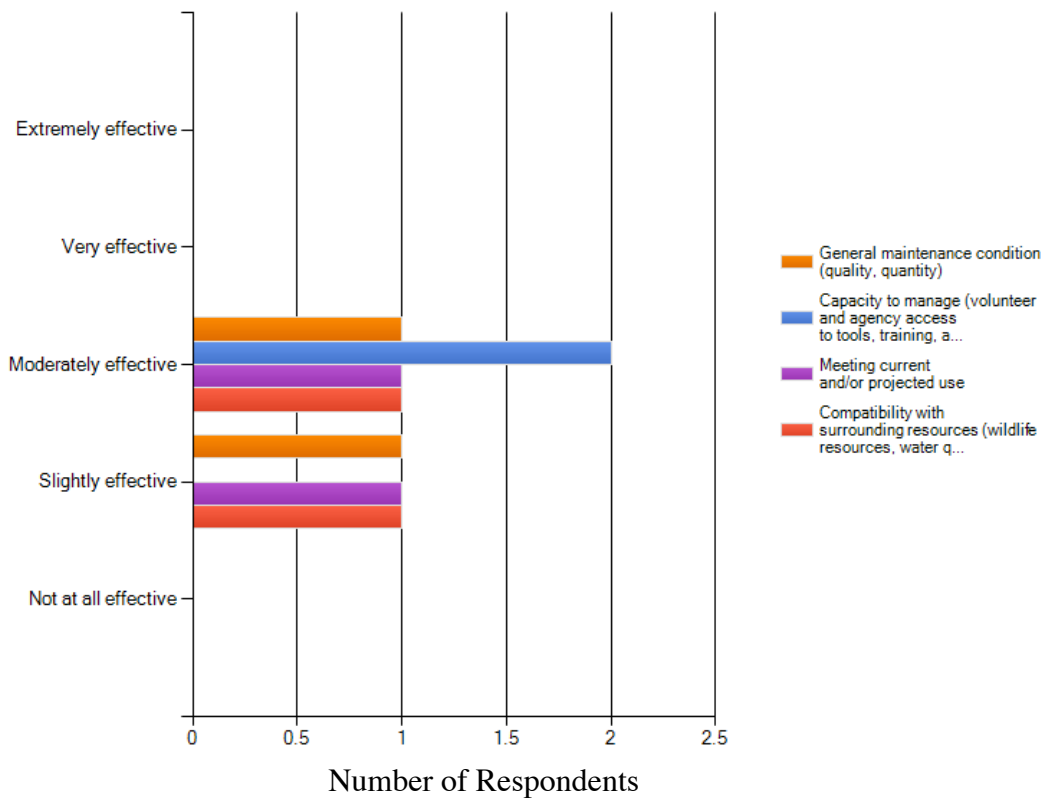
**Reasons Included In Assessment:** The trail is on fall line, with typical issues associated with that. As part of a local trail network, an improved trail would enhance visitor enjoyment and reduce potential resource damage. Improved trails in this network would provide for greater opportunity for loop hikers, and possibly be appropriate for mountain bike use. The trails in the Cooper Creek system are also in close proximity to the Cooper Creek and Mulkey Recreation Areas. In addition, a possible extension of this trail across FDR #39 to tie in with the Shope Gap trailhead would eliminate a mile of road walk, establishing a better loop hike opportunity.



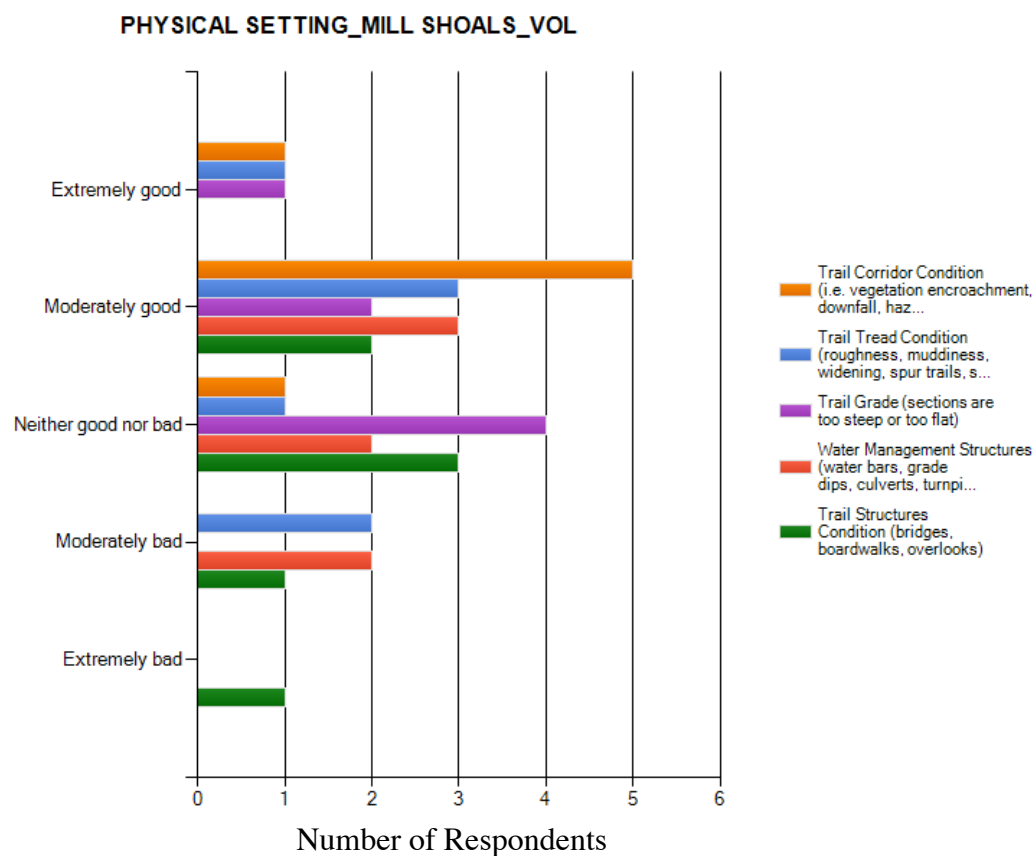
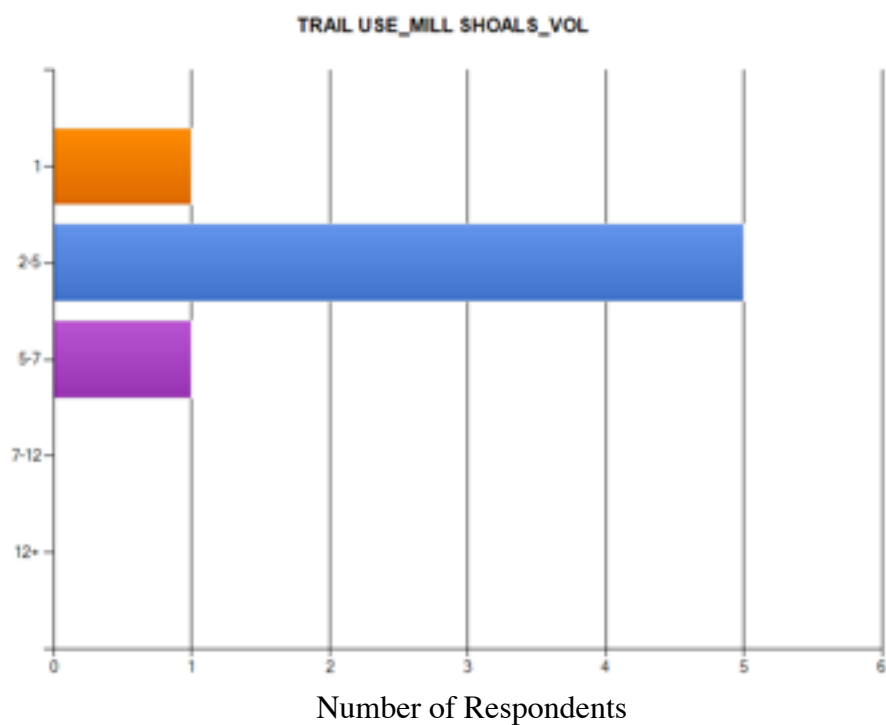
### SOCIAL SETTING\_MILL SHOALS\_USFS



### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_MILL SHOALS\_USFS

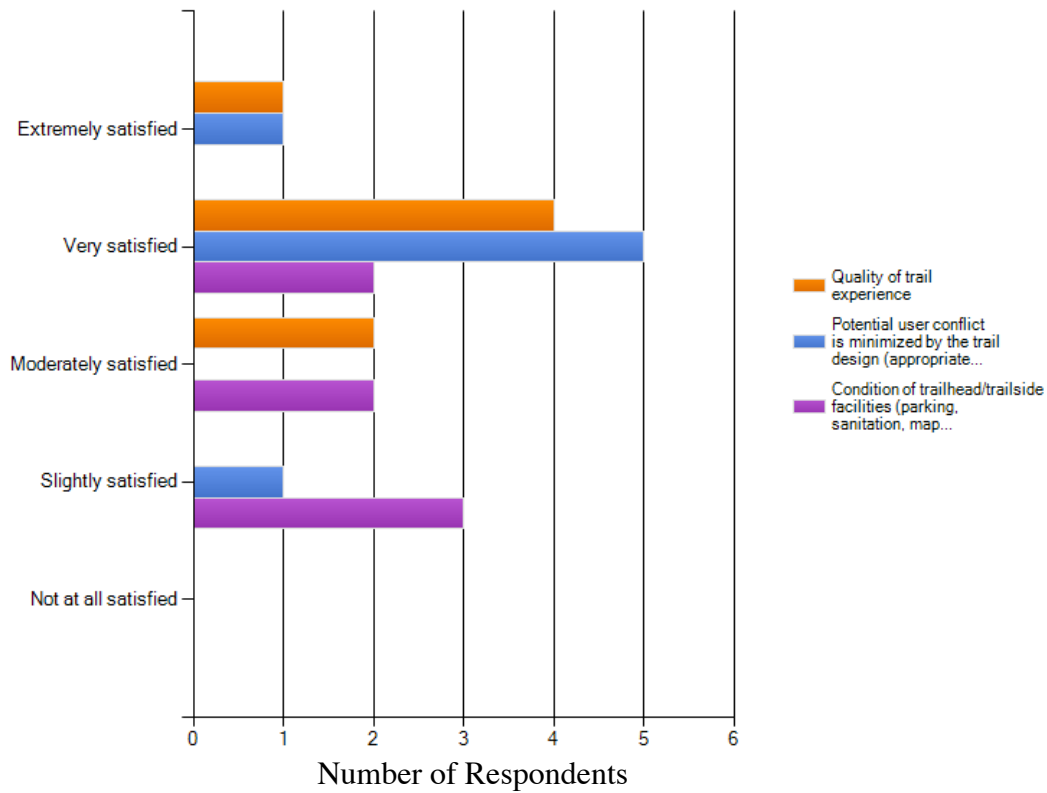


# Survey Results: Volunteers

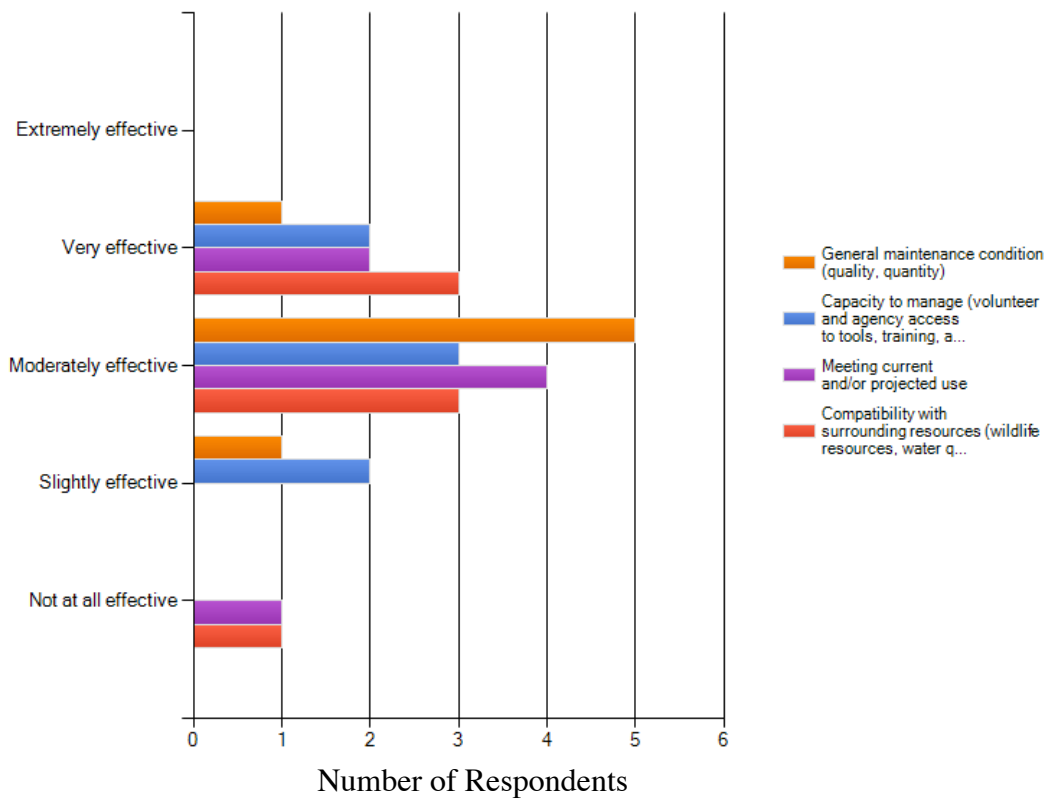




### SOCIAL SETTING\_MILL SHOALS\_VOL



### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_MILL SHOALS\_VOL



## **Volunteer Group Comments:**

Mountain High Hikers:

Don't know the history, the trail is maintained by our club (MHH) for the last 8 years. We put in about 50 hours per year on the trail doing lopping, brushcutting, deadfall removal. The trail is well laid out and does not have much erosion issues. Signage and maps are OK. only light to moderate usage, more in the Spring, Summer and Fall. Area is NOT well known or publicized. no issues known.

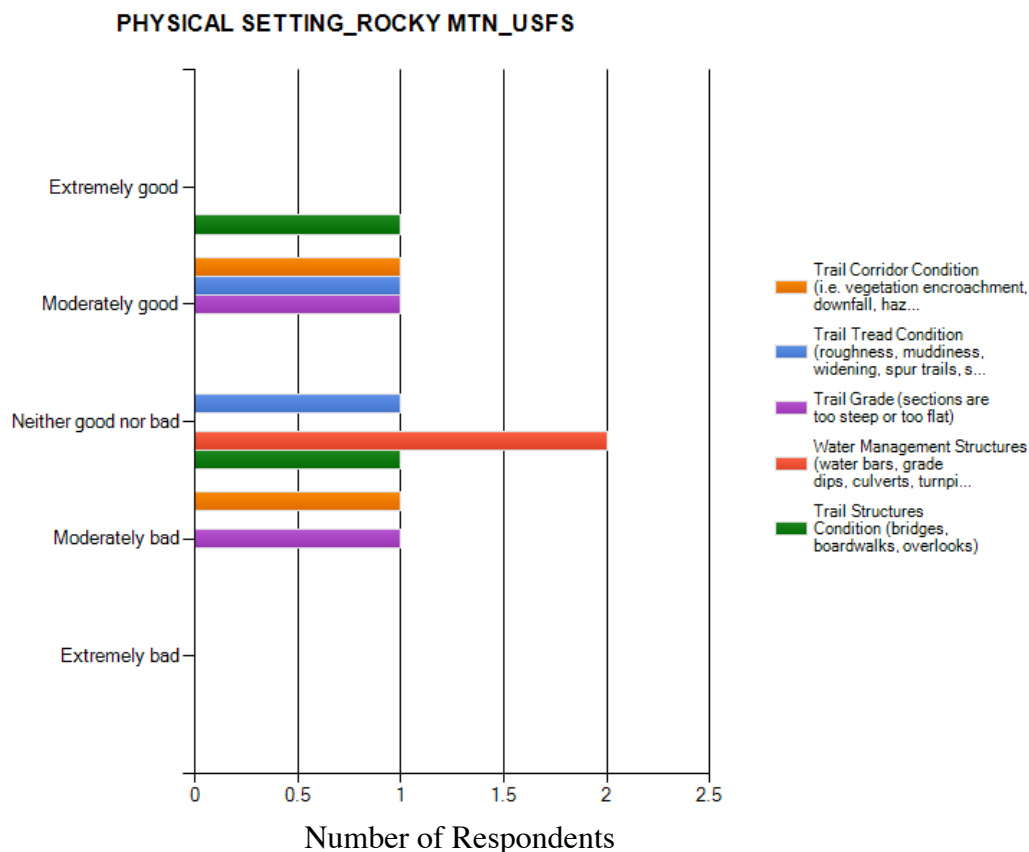
# TRAIL: ROCKY MOUNTAIN

## Survey Results: Forest Service

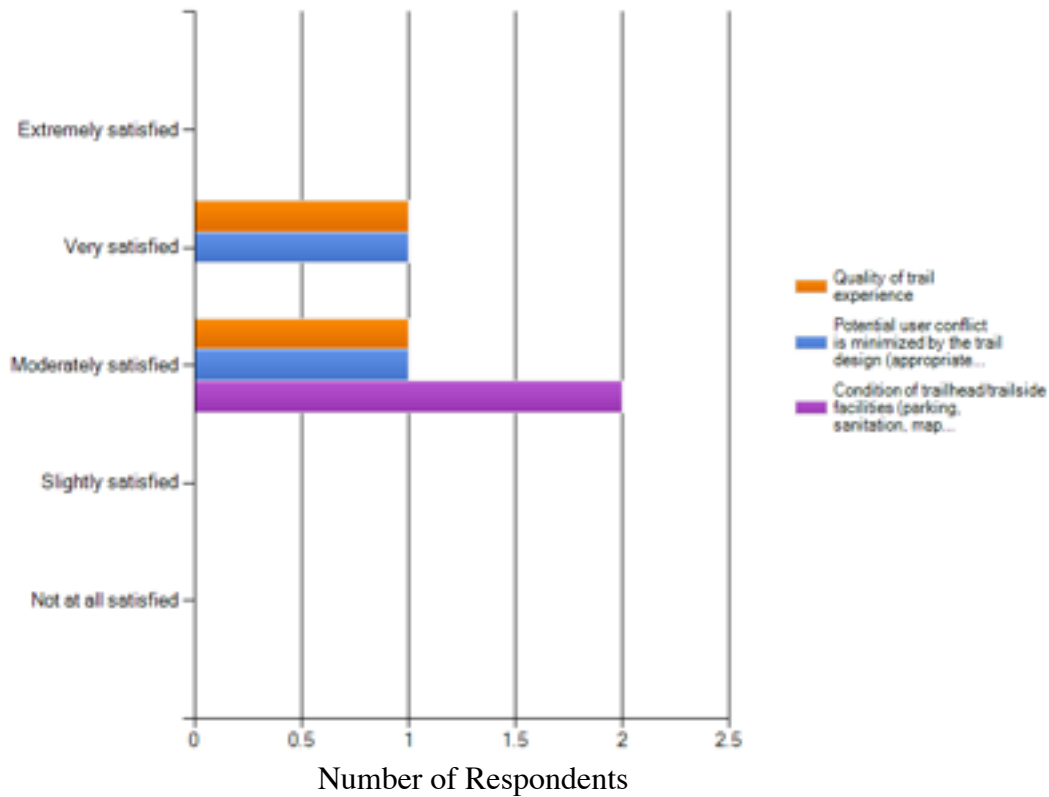
**History:** This route at one time was part of the effort to relocate the Appalachian Trail (A.T.) to avoid the proposed extension of the Blue Ridge Parkway (see Duncan Ridge Trail).

**Maintenance Providers:** As a blue-blazed connector trail to the A.T., this trail is maintained by the GATC

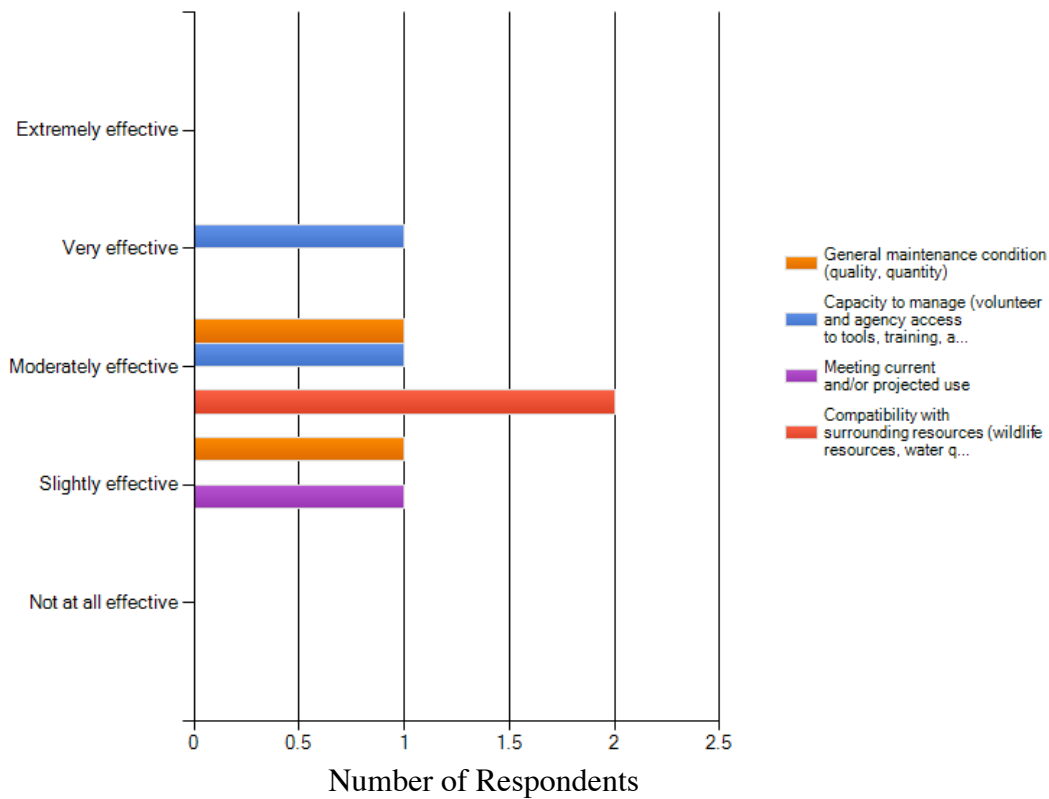
**Reasons Included In Assessment:** The present route is not located on a sidehill location and is difficult to manage water off the trail. This AT-connecting loop is the only one of its kind on the eastern end of the Blue Ridge District. A better route would enhance visitor enjoyment and reduce resource impacts.



**SOCIAL SETTING\_ROCKY MTN\_USFS**

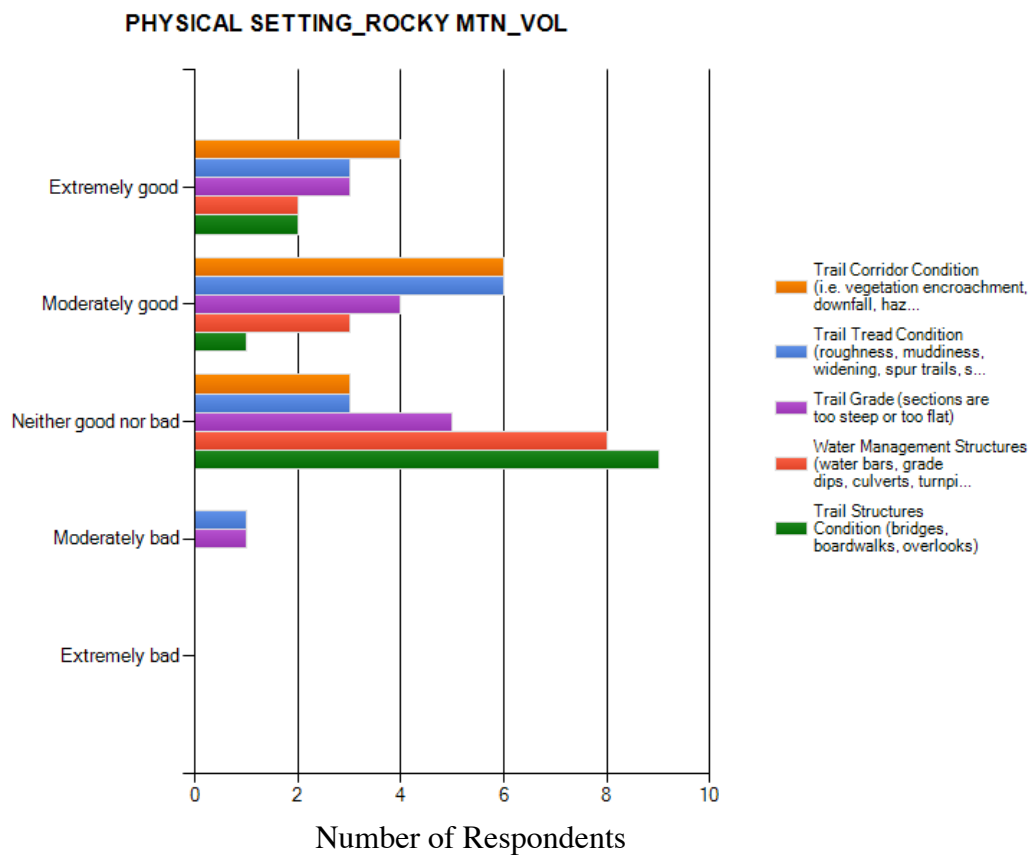
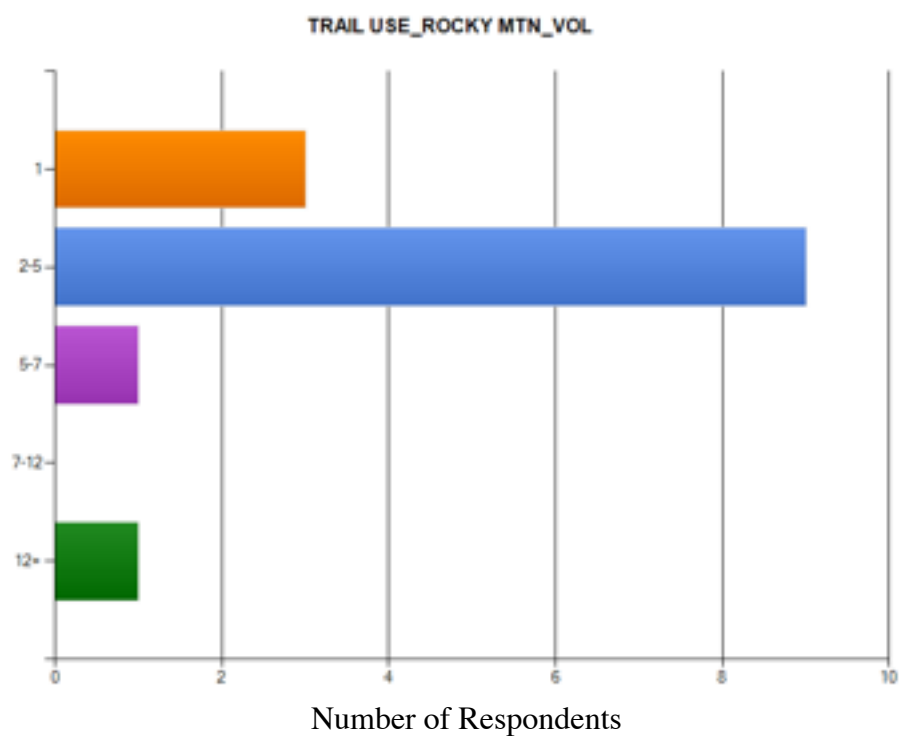


**MANAGERIAL SETTING\_ROCKY MTN\_USFS**

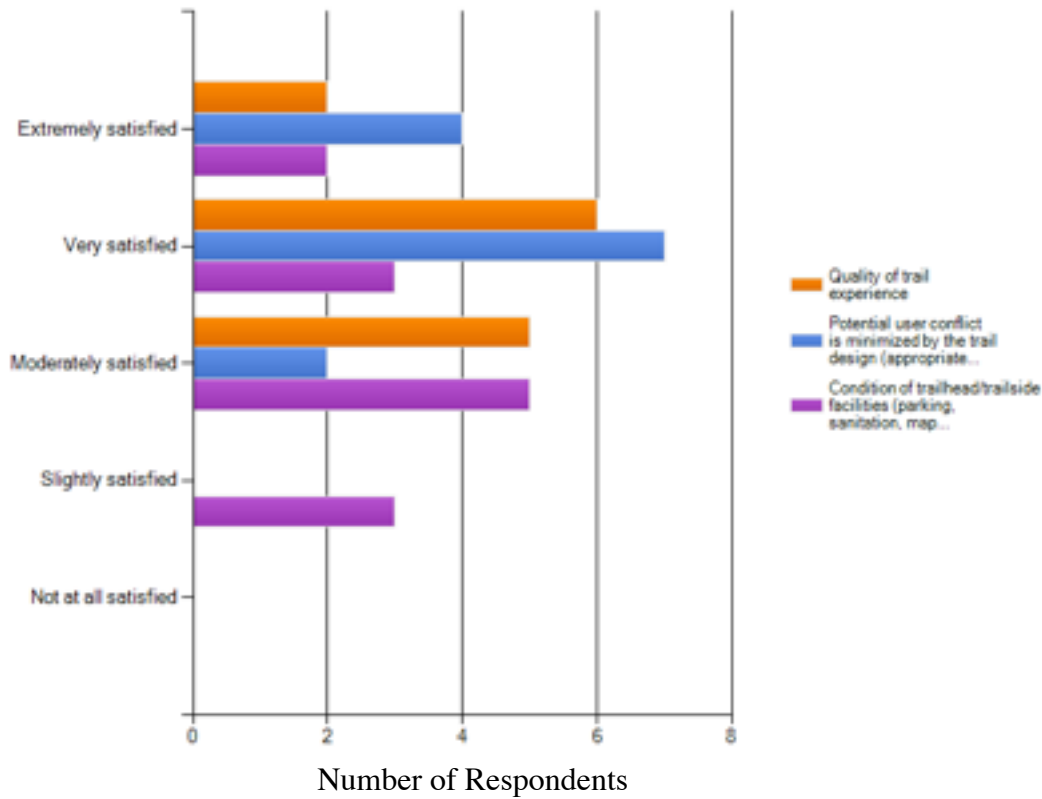




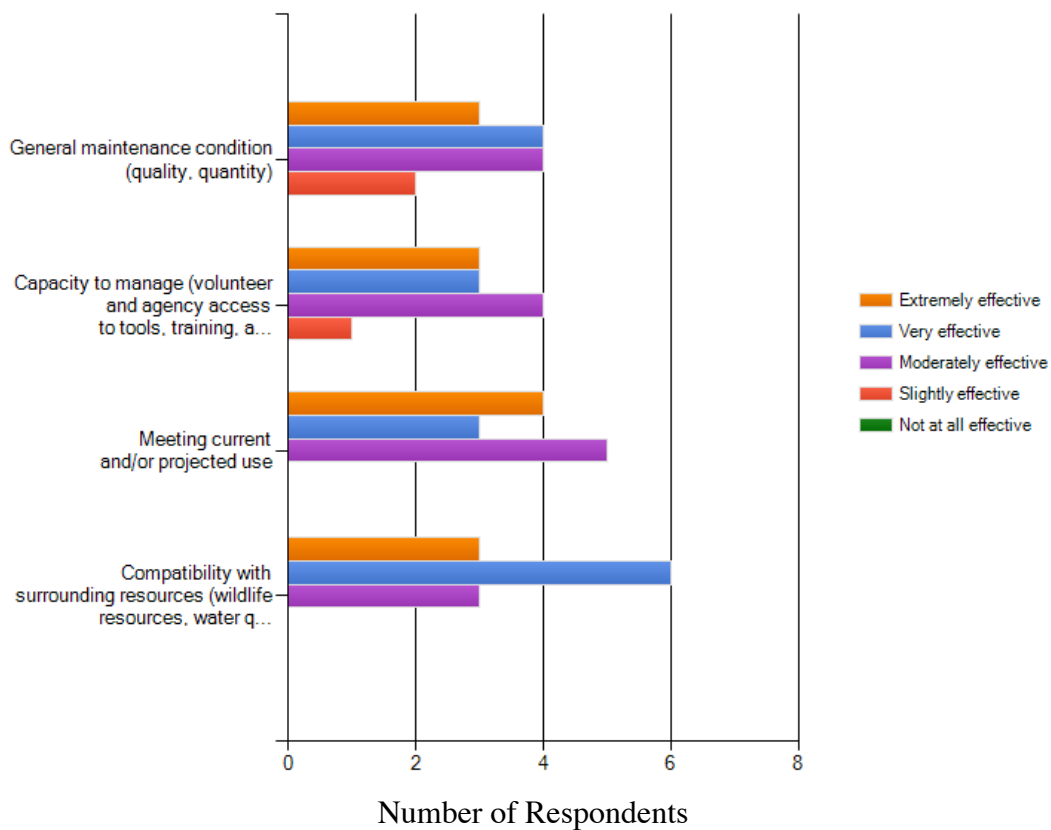
# Survey Results: Volunteers



### SOCIAL SETTING\_ROCKY MTN\_VOL



### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_ROCKY MTN\_VOL



## **Volunteer Group Comments:**

Mountain High Hikers:

Don't know the history of the trail, it is maintained by GATC and receives moderate use all times of the year, it makes a good loop hike from Unicio Gap using the AT as one limb and this as the other. No know issues.

Georgia Forest Watch:

History: No comment given

Maintenance: No comment given

Use: Attractive because it provides for a loop hike convenient to a well-known access point for the AT.

Issues: Conflict occurs sharing a portion of the loop hike path with a vehicle road.

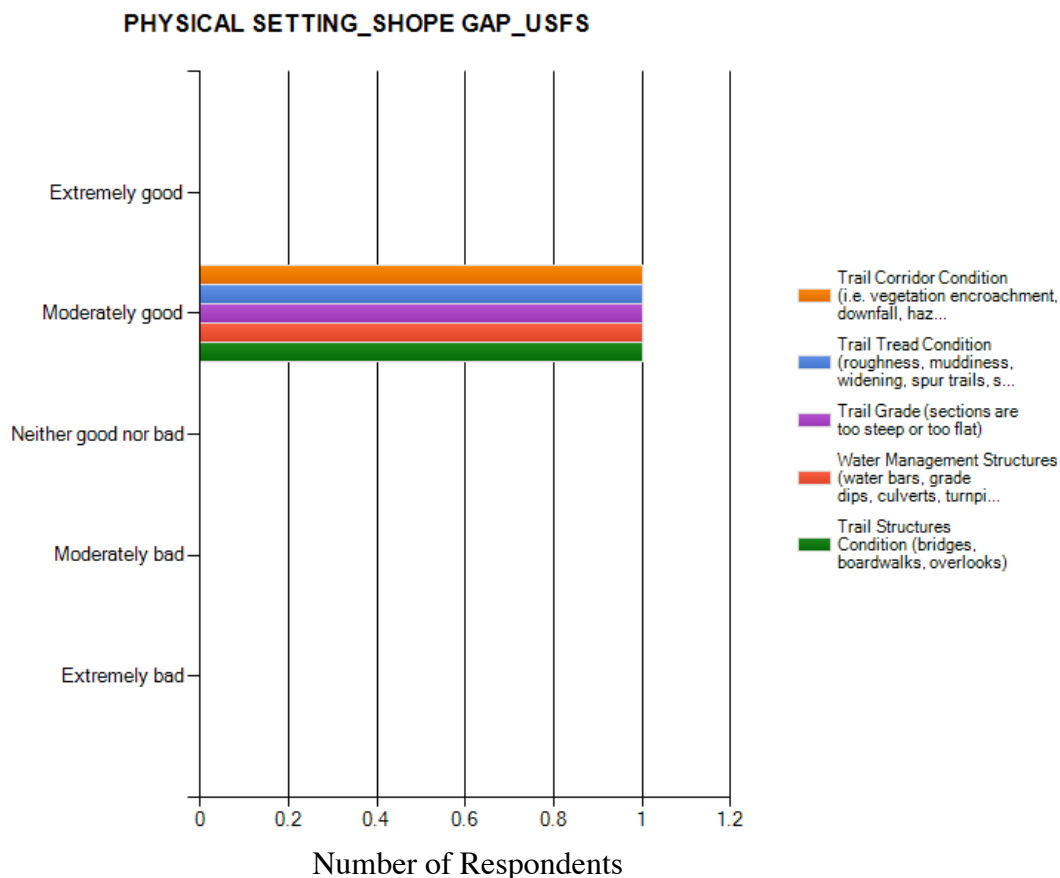
# TRAIL: SHOPE GAP

## Survey Results: Forest Service

**History:** This trail, along with the Yellow Mountain and Mill Shoals Trails, were established by the Ranger District in the late 1980's as part of a trail network in the Cooper Creek Scenic Area. Work was done by Forest Service personnel with some assistance from the mountain biking community. Initially the intent was to allow mountain bike use as well as hiking use on these trails, but the decision was never officially signed off on to allow the bike use.

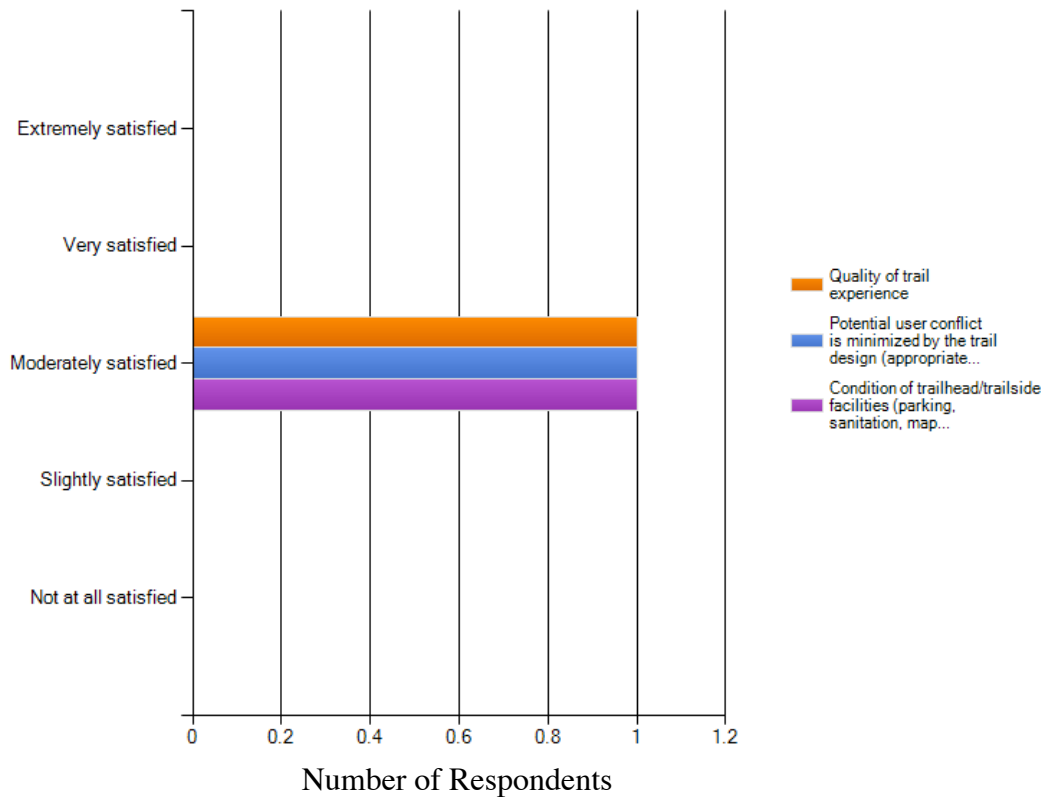
**Maintenance Providers:** The Mountain High Hikers perform periodic maintenance, but not on a set schedule. Blue Ridge District personnel perform some occasional work.

**Reasons Included In Assessment:** The trail is on fall line, with typical issues associated with that. As part of a local trail network, an improved trail would enhance visitor enjoyment and reduce potential resource damage. Improved trails in this network would provide for greater opportunity for loop hikers, and possibly be appropriate for mountain bike use. The trails in the Cooper Creek system are also in close proximity to the Cooper Creek and Mulkey Recreation Areas.

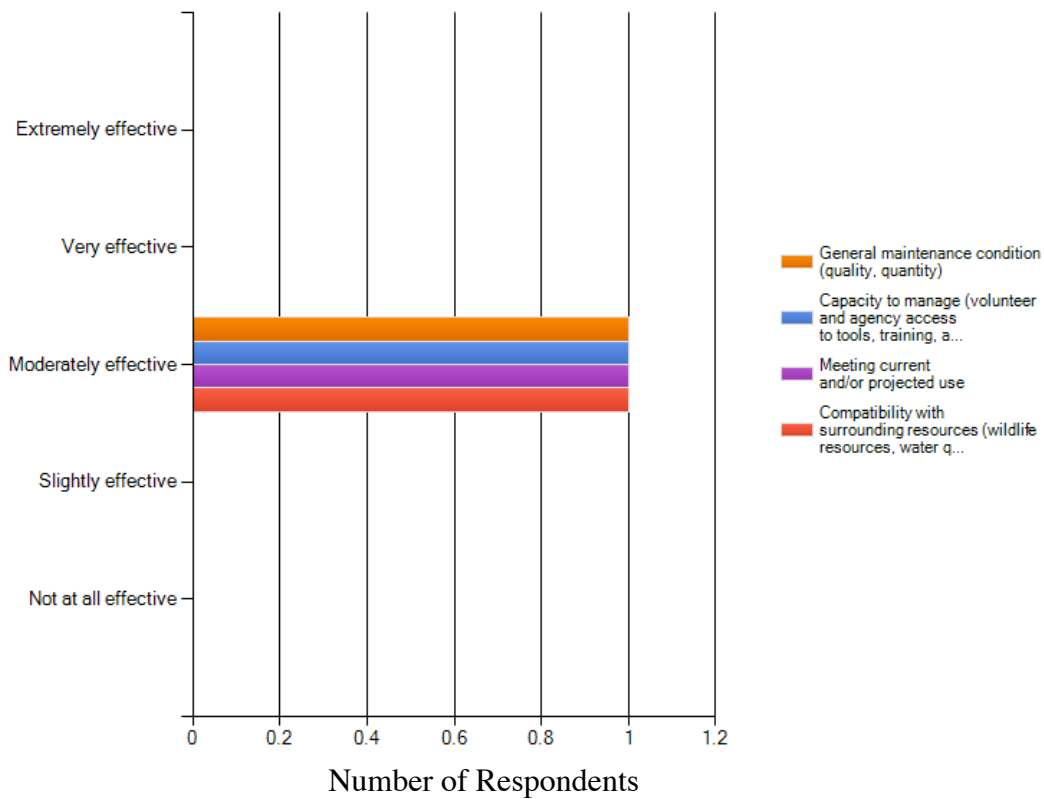




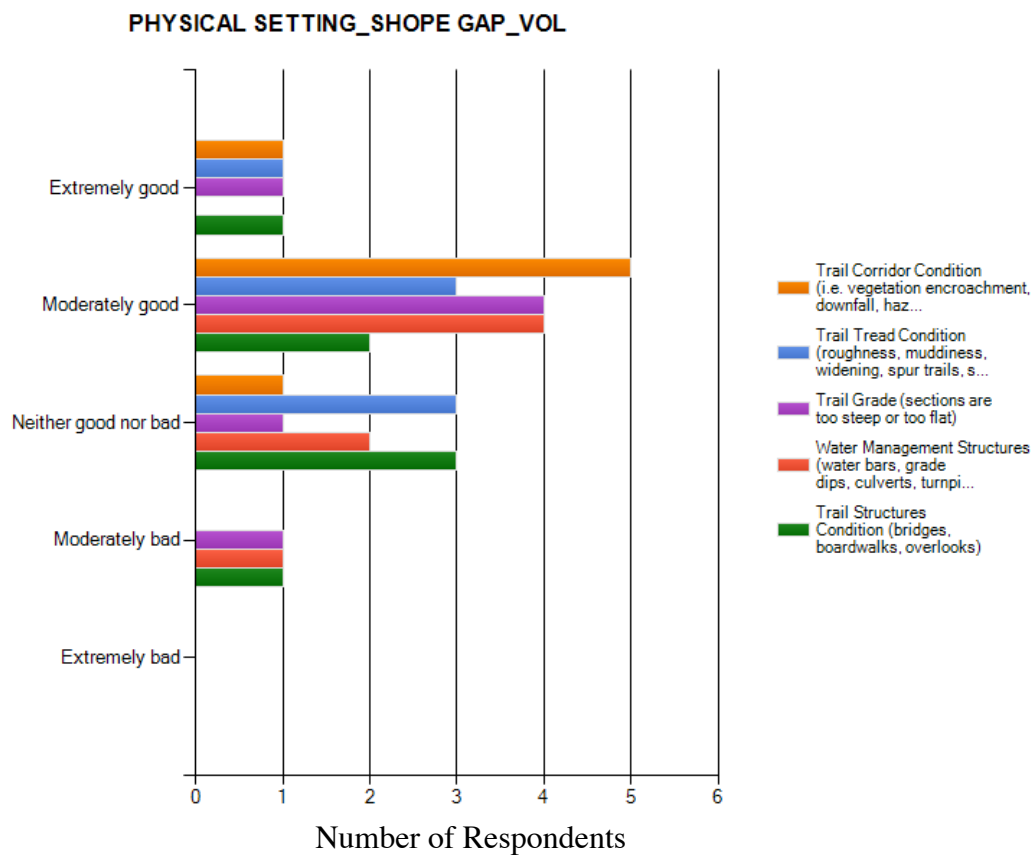
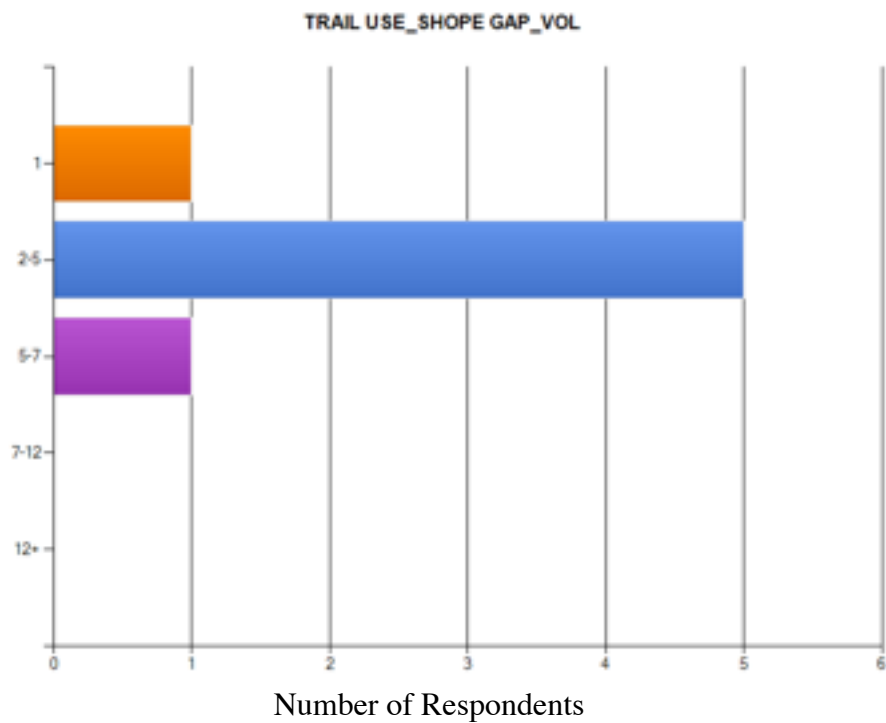
### SOCIAL SETTING\_SHOPE GAP\_USFS



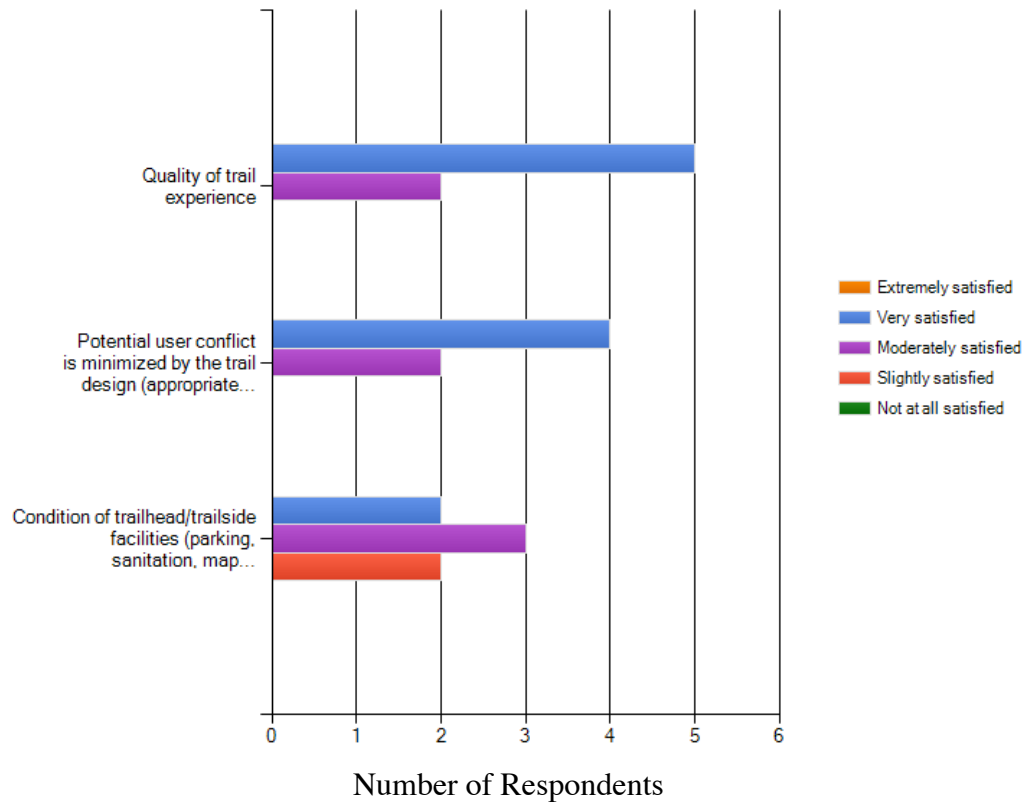
### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_SHOPE GAP\_USFS



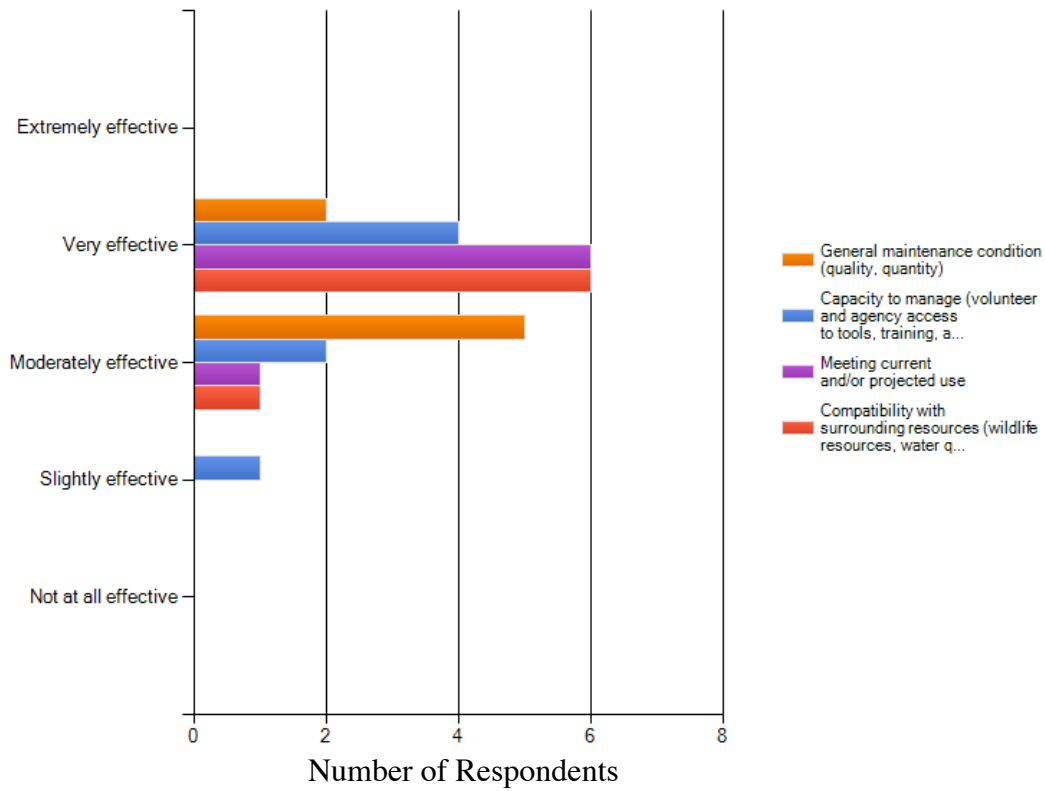
# Survey Results: Volunteers



**SOCIAL SETTING\_SHOPE GAP\_VOL**



**MANAGERIAL SETTING\_SHOPE GAP\_VOL**



## **Volunteer Group Comments:**

Mountain High Hikers:

Don't know the history. Trail has been maintained by our club (MHH) for about 8 years. we usually do one maintenance trip out here per year (20 man hours) and do lopping, brushcutting, and saw work. Trail is laid out pretty well, does not have much erosion issues or need for water diversion. Trail gets light to moderate use, mostly from people camping here in the spring, summer and fall. Area is not widely known, so does not get much use. no known issues with the trail, signage and maps are pretty good



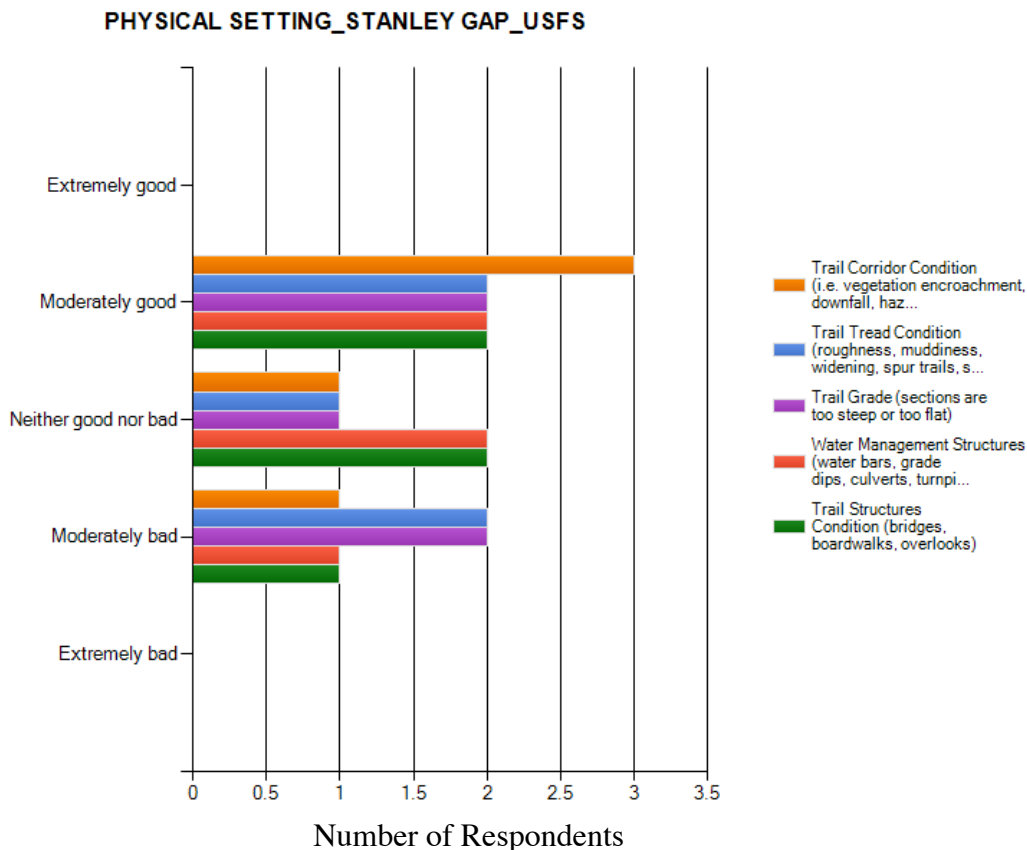
# TRAIL: STANLEY GAP

## Survey Results: Forest Service

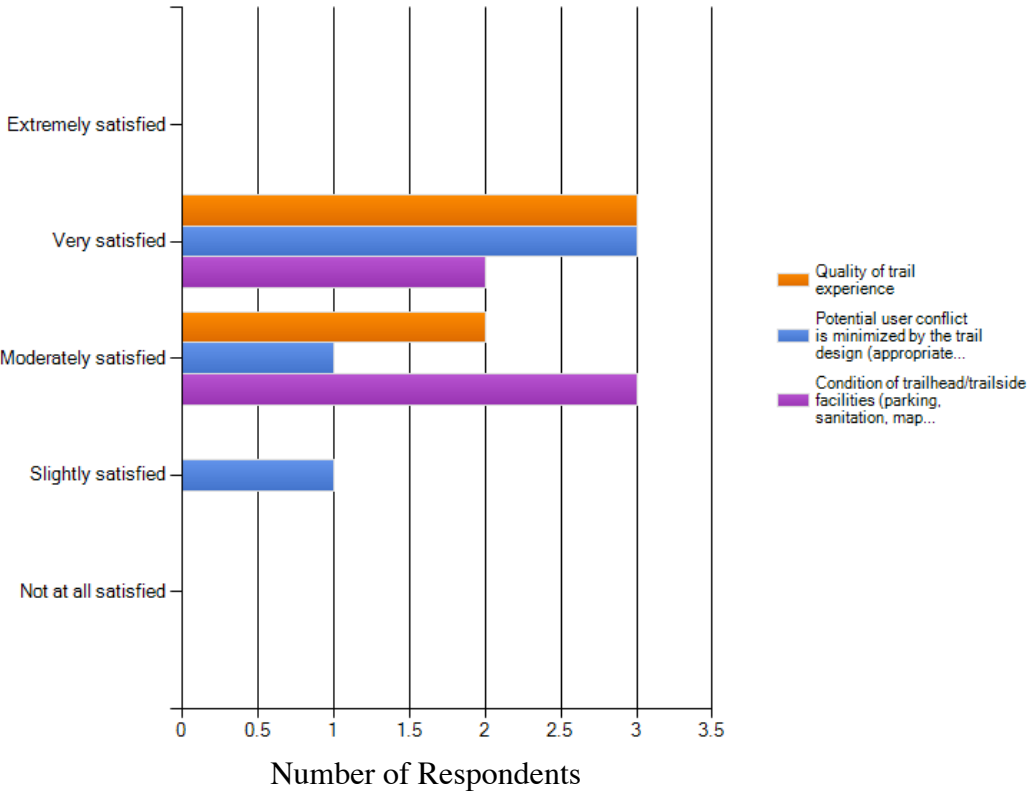
**History:** This trail was established in the mid-1970's by the Ranger District, along with some volunteers from the mountain biking community in the Ellijay area. Part of it's route was chosen to run concurrently with the newly-established Benton Mackaye Trail around 1980.

**Maintenance Providers:** Maintenance of the concurrent BMT portion is being done by BMT volunteers. A maintenance contract was utilized by the Forest Service to perform work on some sections about three years ago. At this time, no one maintains the non-BMT portion on a regular basis, with the exception of occasional clearing work being done by Ranger District personnel.

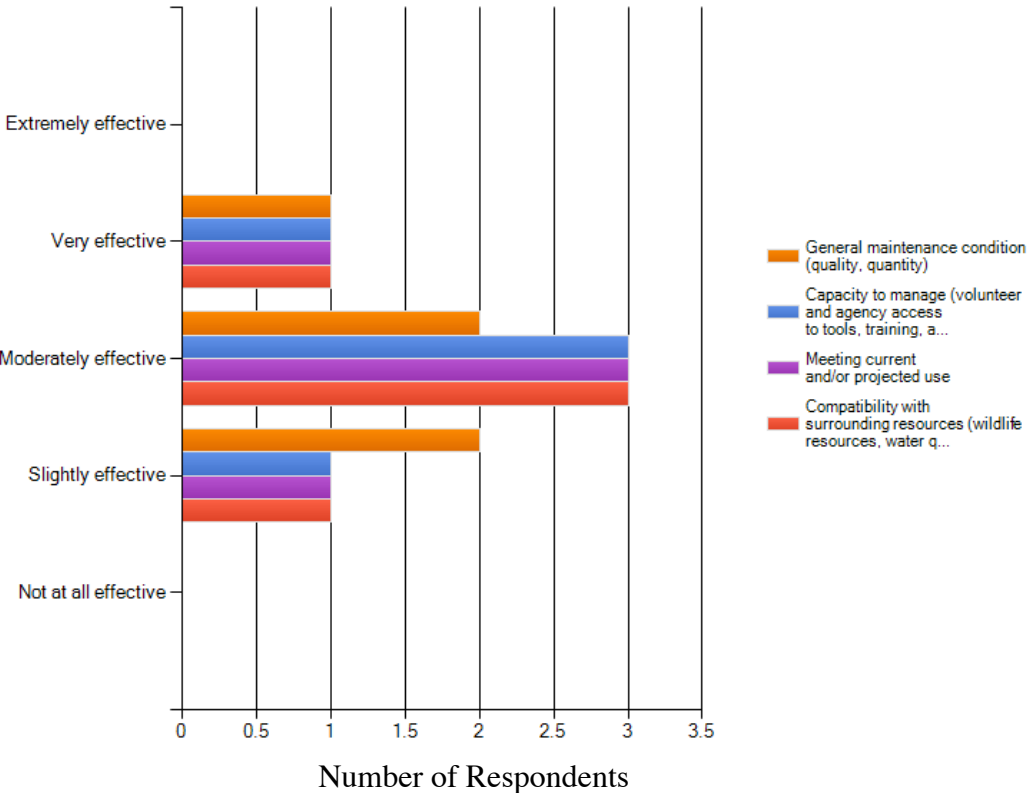
**Reasons Included In Assessment:** This multi-use hike/bike trail has several sections that are on the fall line or otherwise present maintenance challenges. Relocations could enhance visitor enjoyment and reduce resource impacts.



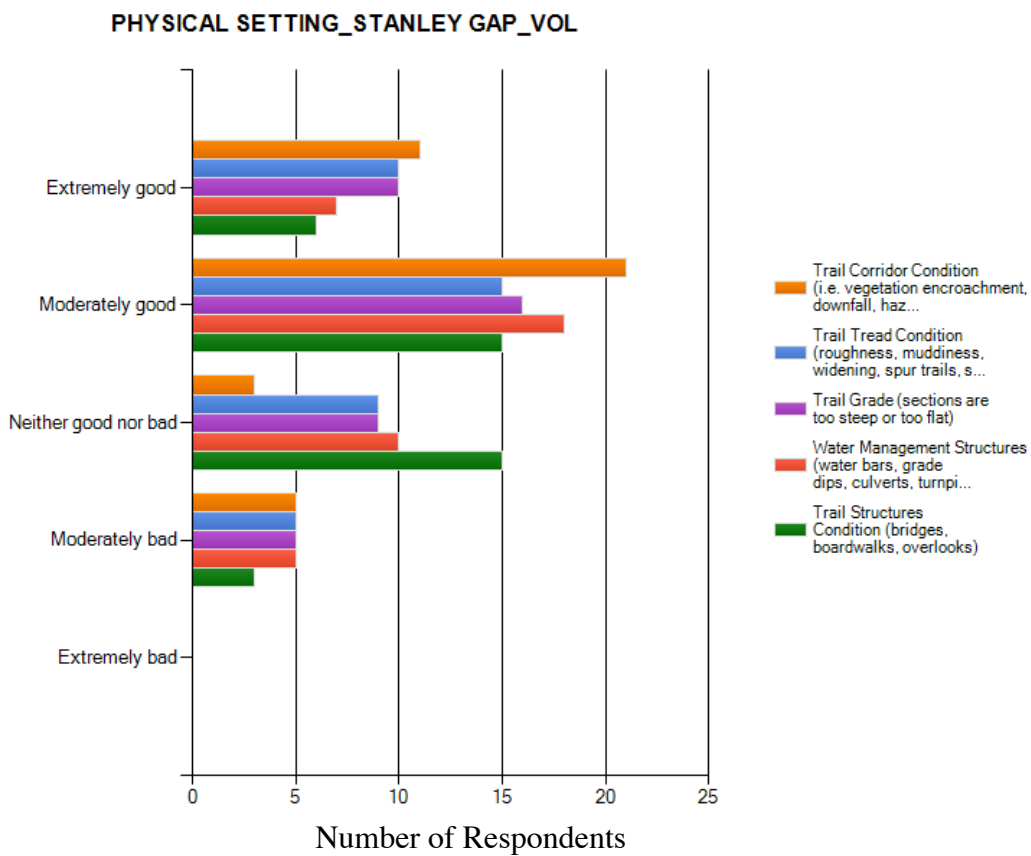
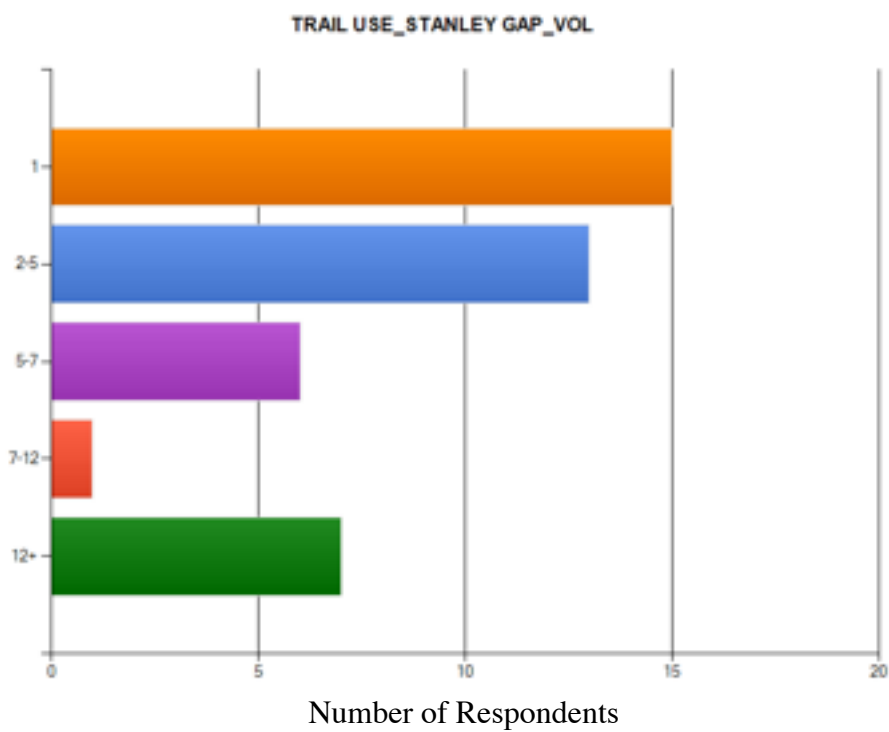
**SOCIAL SETTING\_STANLEY GAP\_USFS**



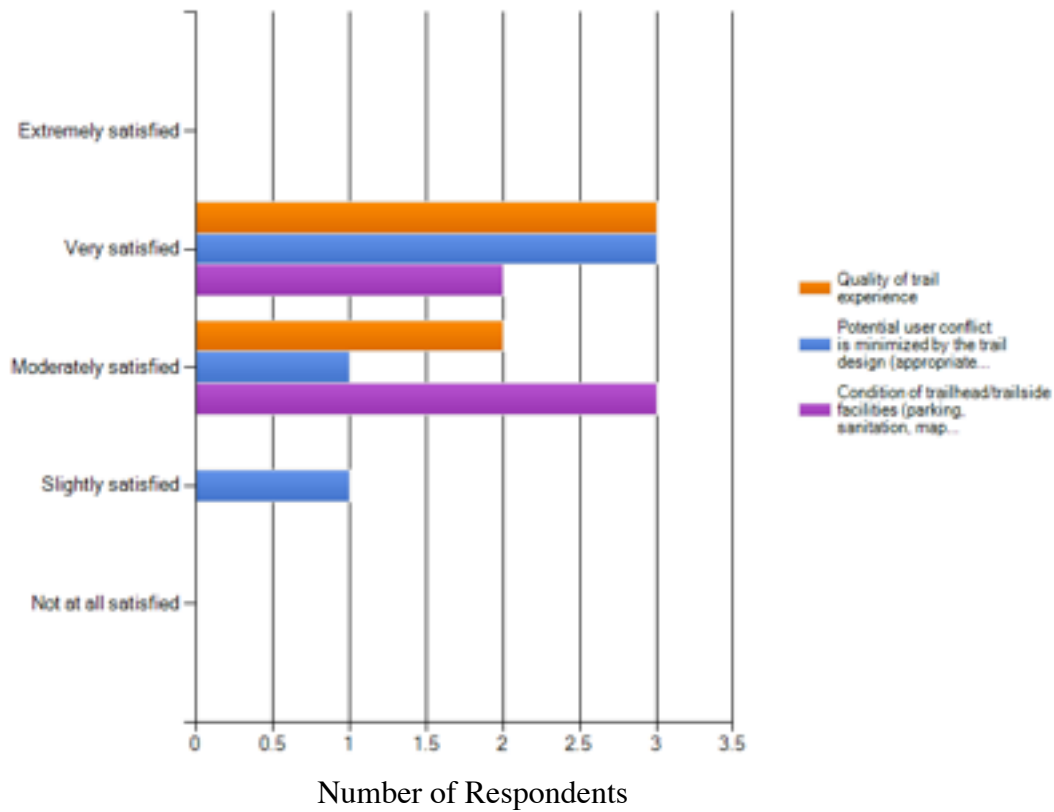
**MANAGERIAL SETTING\_STANLEY GAP\_USFS**



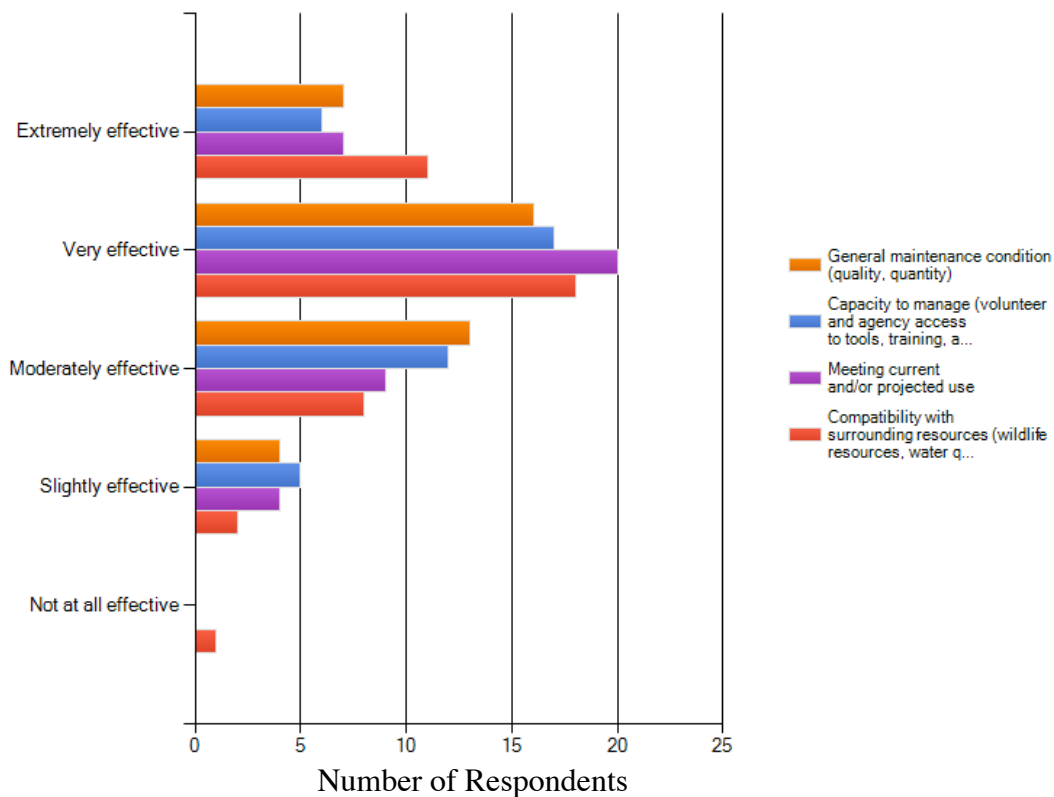
# Survey Results: Volunteers



**SOCIAL SETTING\_STANLEY GAP\_USFS**



**MANAGERIAL SETTING\_STANLEY GAP\_VOL**





## Volunteer Group Comments:

Georgia Forest Watch:

History: No comment made

Maintenance: No comment made

Use: Lower use levels.

Issues: There are a few side trails that are assumed to be user created. These have campsites at the end. The lead in trail to reach Stanley Gap trail proper runs along a stream. That section is muddy, wide, rooted, and does not have any way of stopping the runoff into the stream. There are numerous places where people have made their own trails to the water. *Contractor's note: The provided comments regarding the lead-in trail most likely refer to a nearby waterfall destination trail that is managed as a hiking-only trail.*

## IMBA/SORBA:

History of trail: Opened in early 90s. Some reroutes over the years, but basically the same trail. Current or past maintenance providers, general maintenance intervals and activities undertaken. An estimate of hours/year expended on each trail would be particularly helpful: SORBA provides regular maintenance on this trail, clearing trees and other work as requested by the FS. Types, amounts, and seasonality of use the trail receives: Heavy use, year round. Another favorite of mountain bikers. Very steep and challenging. Always someone on this trail. You know you've been mountain biking when you ride Stanley Gap. And, you'll be back for more! - Known problematic or recurring issues (natural resource and/or visitor management concerns/problems): None

## Mountain High Hikers:

Do not know the history. The top part of the trail that is also the footbed of the Benton Mackaye trail and is maintained by that club, not sure who maintains the rest of the trail. This trail system receives moderate use with both bikes and hikers all year around. No known issues.

# TRAIL: YELLOW MOUNTAIN

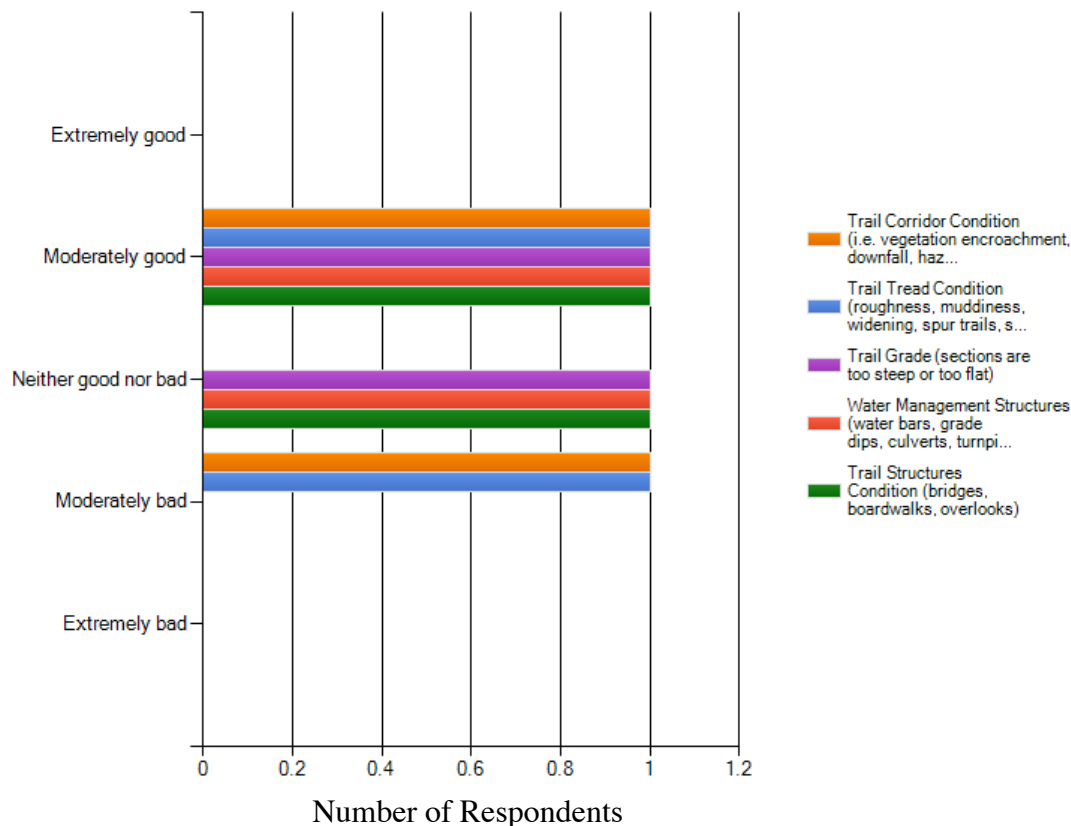
## Survey Results: Forest Service

**History:** This trail, along with the Shope Gap and Mill Shoals Trails, were established by the Ranger District in the late 1980's as part of a trail network in the Cooper Creek Scenic Area. Work was done by Forest Service personnel with some assistance from the mountain biking community. Initially the intent was to allow mountain bike use as well as hiking use on these trails, but the decision was never officially signed off on to allow the bike use.

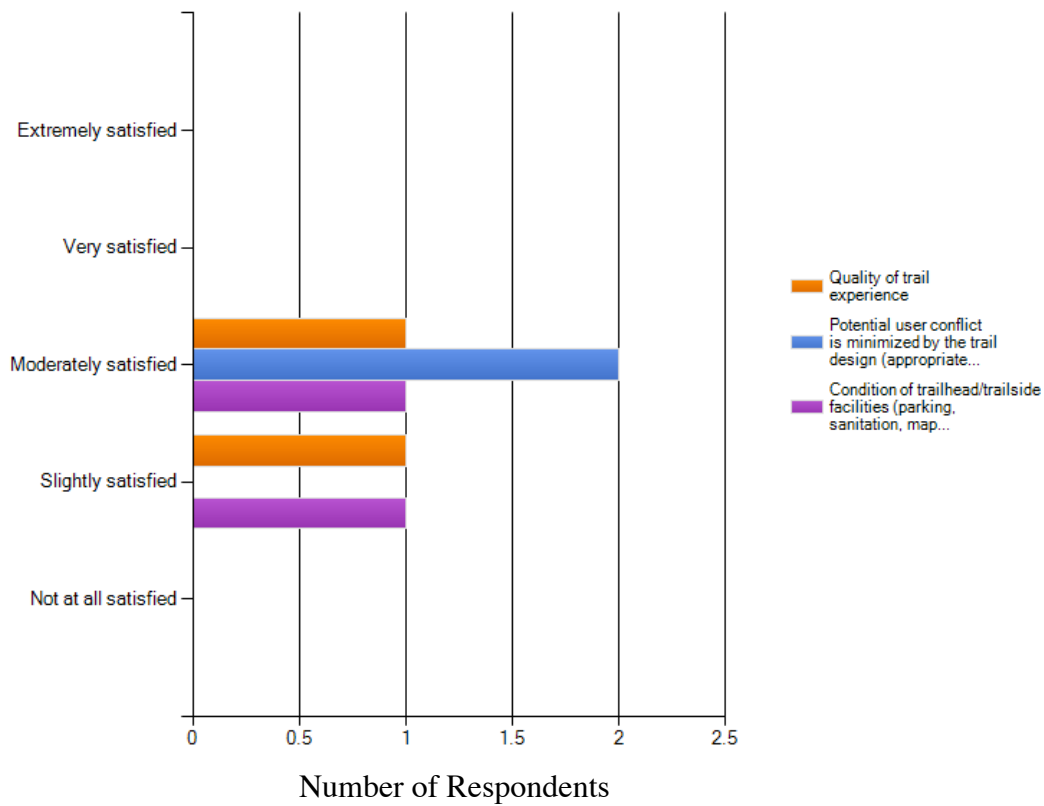
**Maintenance Providers:** The Mountain High Hikers perform periodic maintenance, but not on a set schedule. Blue Ridge District personnel perform some occasional work.

**Reasons Included In Assessment:** Much of the trail is on fall line, with typical issues associated with that. As part of a local trail network, an improved trail would enhance visitor enjoyment and reduce potential resource damage. Improved trails in this network would provide for greater opportunity for loop hikers, and possibly be appropriate for mountain bike use. The trails in the Cooper Creek system are also in close proximity to the Cooper Creek and Mulkey Recreation Areas.

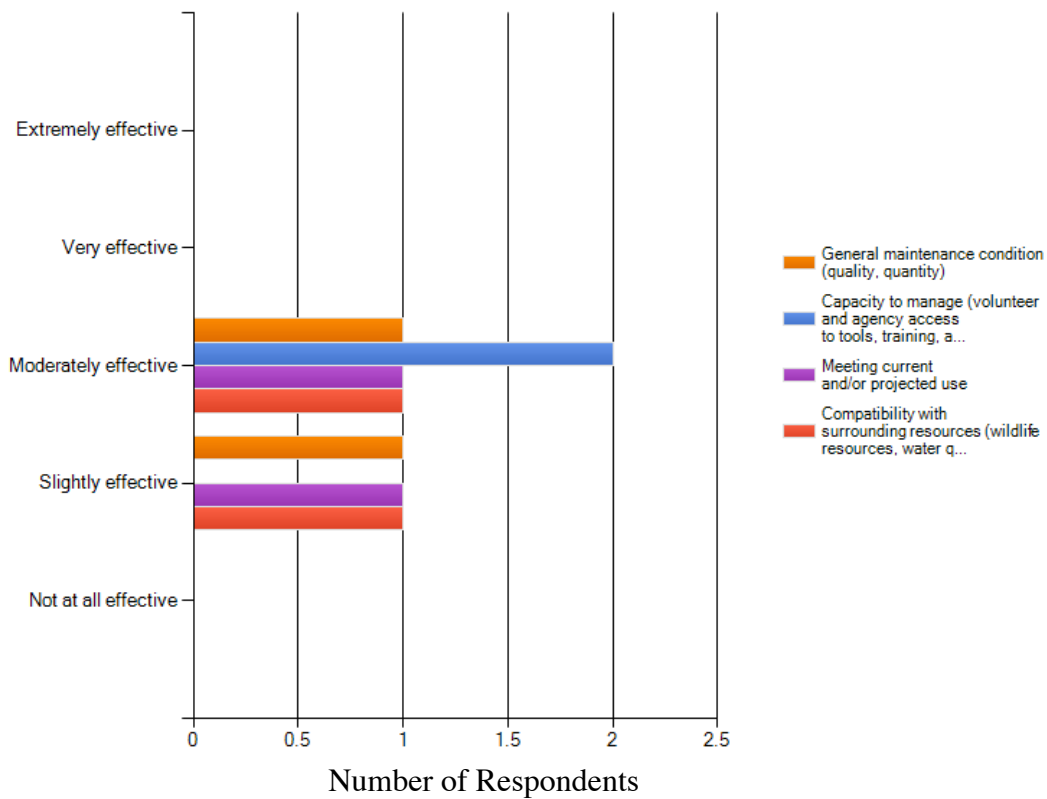
PHYSICAL SETTING/SUSTAINABILITY\_YELLOW MTN\_USFS



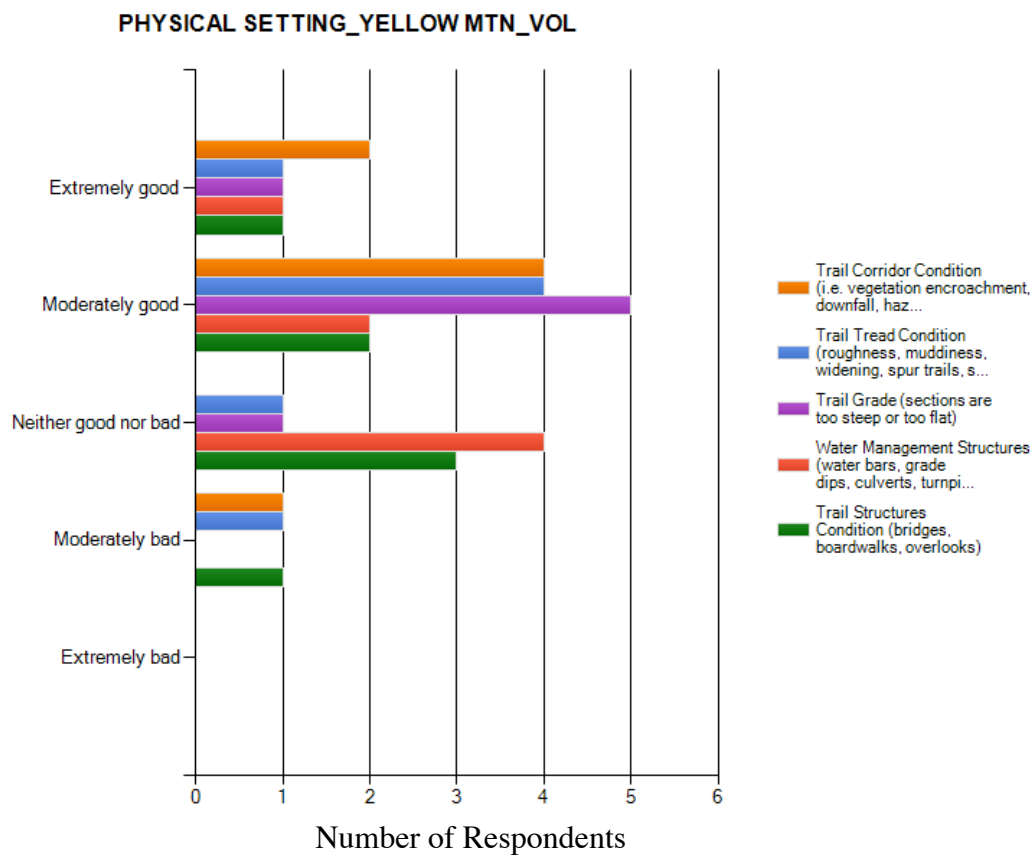
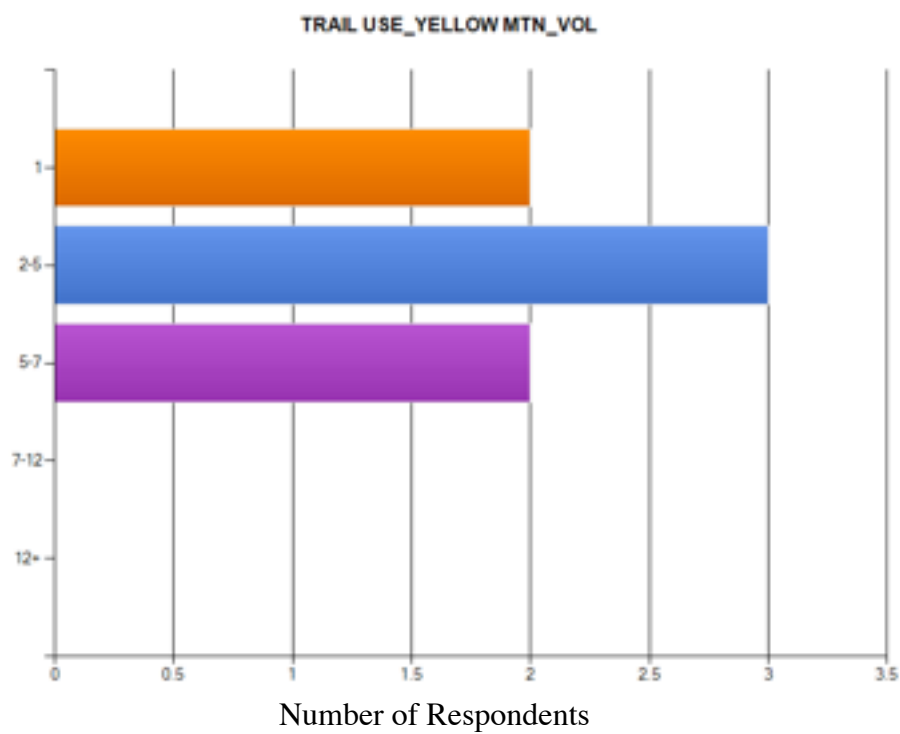
**SOCIAL SETTING\_YELLOW MTN\_USFS**



**MANAGERIAL SETTING\_YELLOW MTN\_USFS**

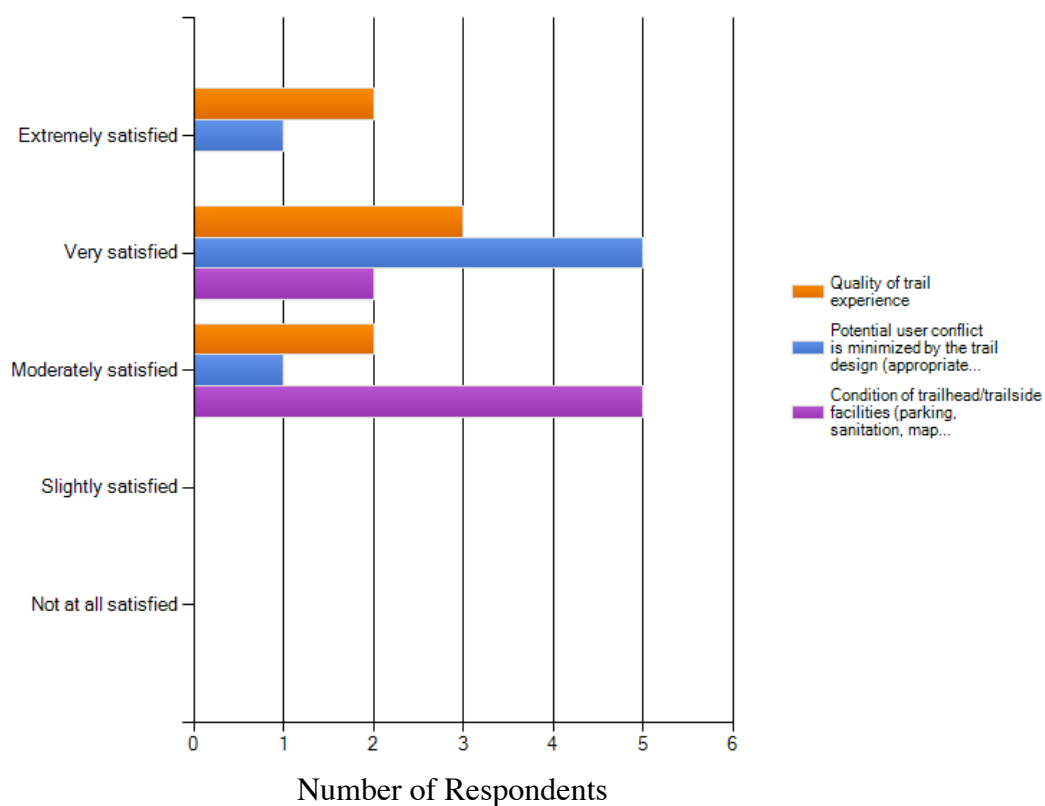


# Survey Results: Volunteers

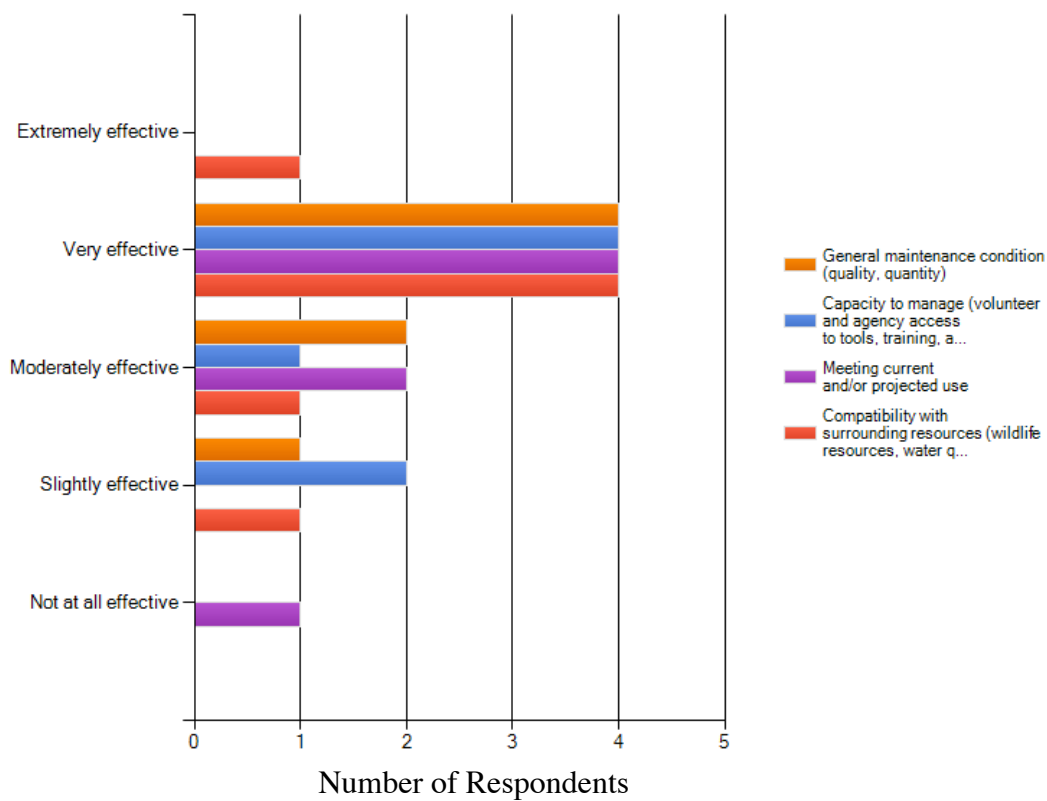




### SOCIAL SETTING\_YELLOW MTN\_VOL



### MANAGERIAL SETTING\_YELLOW MTN\_VOL



### **Volunteer Group Comments:**

Mountain High Hikers:

Don't know the history, the trail is maintained by our club (MHH) for the last 8 years. We put in about 50 hours per year on the trail doing lopping, brushcutting, deadfall removal. The trail is well laid out and does not have much erosion issues. Signage and maps are OK. only light to moderate usage, more in the Spring, Summer and Fall. Area is NOT well known or publicized. no issues known